Edward Cadbury – Paternalistic employer or Quaker-inspired pathfinder of British industrial relations pluralism and women workers' champion?

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Contents

Abstract

Using Edward Cadbury as the central character, this thesis considers the development of the Cadbury company between the years 1899 and 1919. This was a period of experiment and innovation, and the occasion when all the reforms that came to epitomise the company as being 'progressive', were introduced. Most commentators portray the company as being paternalistic, but this appears too simplistic an answer. Instead, this thesis takes an alternative approach and poses the question: **How far did Edward Cadbury have a distinctive Quaker approach to managing people, and what were the main elements of this approach?** The question is addressed through three principal themes: First, the thesis challenges the idea that the company was run in any way as a form of narrow social control paternalism, and in so doing, will draw attention to the written work of Edward Cadbury, as well as identify the workplace practices introduced into the firm in its early period of development. The second main theme argues that Edward Cadbury and his approach to labour relations was an early version of pluralism, one that could be described in contemporary terms as 'sophisticated modern' or 'neo-pluralist'. Finally, the third main theme takes issue with the idea that the influence of Quakerism had little to do with the workplace system that emerged in the Cadbury company. Included will be important contextual background information covering details of what was happening in the world of Quakerism during this period, as well as important information on the Birmingham industrial relations environment of the time. Significant use is made of Edward Cadbury's written work to identify his role as a progressive employer and champion of women in the workplace. This is further validated by a consideration of the introduction of Works Councils into the company, as well as reference to the first two Quaker Employers Conferences of 1918 and 1928. The thesis concludes by suggesting that the management approach developed over a century ago by Edward Cadbury is more appropriately described today as 'sophisticated modern' or 'neo-pluralist', and ends with an outline of a distinctive Quaker approach to managing people that is characterised as 'covenantal'.

Introduction

a) Introduction to the thesis

This thesis takes a fresh look at Edward Cadbury and the way in which the Cadbury company was managed and run in its early period of development. Previous studies have suggested either that Cadbury was an example of a progressive employer informed by the Christian beliefs of its paternalistic owners, or has cast doubt on the depth of such sentiment and offered a more critical view. Neither has focused on the pivotal role of Edward Cadbury, probed fully the nature of Cadbury's Quakerism, or considered his contribution to modern management thinking and industrial relations pluralism in Britain. This thesis will explore these areas more fully by focussing on the period, 1899 – 1919, and addressing the question: **How far did Edward Cadbury have a distinctive Quaker approach to managing people, and what were the main elements of this approach?** In order to answer this question, the thesis will identify, discuss and debate three crucial themes that are central to the research question: a) **to what extent was the firm of Cadbury paternalistic?** b) **was the management approach at Cadbury an early form of pluralism?** c) **how influential was Quakerism to the development of the workplace system at Cadbury.** I will introduce these three themes in this Introduction, and then address them instrumentally throughout the thesis, before returning to make final comments about them in the Conclusion.

Beginning with paternalism, this is a term that has often been invoked when describing labour relations at the Cadbury company. But paternalism is a term with different meanings, and a dictionary definition will be helpful:

> Paternalism has been described as a large and loose term, without any clear definition. This is because the idea itself can be divided into weak and strong definitions. The weak version is seen as simply the benign and benevolent behaviour of the good employer. A stronger version would identify a power nexus at the heart of the employment relationship. The subordinate in the relationship would be unable to recognise his or her 'real' interests, but would instead submit him or herself to the care and protection of the superior in return for acts of service. It is a reciprocal relationship that can develop into one of excessive control by the superior of the subordinate (Kimberley, 2016d, p. 317).

In addressing the idea of paternalism, the thesis will challenge the view that the company was run in any way as a **narrow social control paternalist**, and in order to do so, will draw attention to the written work of Edward Cadbury, as well as identify the workplace practices introduced into the firm in its early period of development. The second main theme will argue that Edward Cadbury, as the central figure and architect of labour relations in the firm, was an early and innovative British management thinker. His approach to labour relations was an early version of pluralism, one that could be described in contemporary

terms as 'sophisticated modern' or 'neo-pluralist'. Another dictionary definition will be helpful here, as pluralism is another contested concept and needs some clarification:

> For pluralists, employers and employees hold many opposing interests on various aspects of the employment relationship. Consequently, employers should not demand, or expect, absolute deference to their authority, but accept that conflict is a legitimate and inevitable feature of work.....The acceptance of inevitable clashes at work and the preference for negotiation prompts pluralists towards favouring formal means of institutionalising conflict management. Trade unionism and collective bargaining were historically the preferred mechanisms, but as these have declined in coverage across many industrialised economies, pluralists have looked to other instruments such as legal regulation, mandated consultation rights and alternative dispute resolution systems. Such institutional mechanisms are considered by pluralists to potentially offer a fairer and more viable way in which conflicts of interests at work can be identified, debated and resolved in a mutually agreed fashion (Cullinane, 2016, p. 336).

Whilst Edward Cadbury and the company always supported collective bargaining through trade union representation, the firm was also open to new and different ways of providing a voice for employees. This was not as an alternative to trade union representation, but rather as an additional voice in the workplace. This was a voice that could act and work alongside trade unions, rather than in opposition to them. The evidence supporting trade union organisation in the company, as well as the early introduction of works councils, will be used to suggest this was the case at Cadbury.

The third main theme will take issue with the notion that the influence of Quakerism had little to do with the workplace system that emerged in the Cadbury company. This is the argument that has found most support in the work of Mick Rowlinson, and this research will engage in debate with Rowlinson's arguments throughout the thesis (Rowlinson, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2002). Instead, the case is made that religious ideas did matter in the management practices that developed at Cadbury. This can be demonstrated by a fuller appraisal of Quakerism and its practice, and by contextualising the development of the Cadbury company in its Birmingham and wider industrial relations environment. These are two areas that receive scant attention in the literature. They can, however, help to provide a more informed and comprehensive understanding of how and why the company developed and unfolded as it did. Particular attention is given in the thesis to appraising the written and practical work of Edward Cadbury, which show him to be an early British management thinker of some note (Kimberley, 2013a). It is well known among scholars that research on management in the UK workplace has received less attention than trade unions and employee representation (Bacon, 2008). Through Cadbury's written work, this thesis provides an example of early British management thought emerging and developing in a large manufacturing workplace. First, this was demonstrated through the role that women experienced in the Birmingham workplace (Cadbury, Shann and Matheson, 1906), then progressed through the wider issue of the sweated trades (Cadbury and Shann, 1907),

before ending with a 'sophisticated modern' approach to workplace relations (Cadbury, 1912). This was an approach that recognised and supported the role of trade unions as a progressive force within British industrial relations (Cadbury, 1914).

Some measure of the practical applications emerging from these ideas is provided in the way the company introduced and implemented Works Councils, and the company involvement and support for the Quaker Employers Conferences of 1918 and 1928. The minutes of the Works Councils, their discussion in the 'letters' pages of the *Bournville Works Magazine* (*BWM*), and the reports of the Quaker Employers Conferences, all provide important and largely unmined primary material either ignored or neglected in much of the literature. Some consideration of these help to provide important insights into what was happening in the company in this period, as well as a wider understanding of the lengths Quaker employers (and Cadbury in particular) were prepared to go to fulfil what they considered to be their Christian duties towards their employees. The thesis will conclude with a discussion of the three main themes considered throughout the research, before offering its conclusions. The voice of Edward Cadbury will be heard frequently in a way which will underline what I argue was the particularly pivotal role he played in these developments. This is most obviously the case concerning the injustices experienced by women, although he applied his approach to all workers. C Wright Mills suggested the 'sociological imagination' "enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society" (Mills, 1959, p. 12). This thesis employs a methodological approach in that tradition. Throughout the thesis the argument will be made that Edward Cadbury was an early British management innovator whose significance has been sorely overlooked. His principal contributions were as a promoter and defender of women and their role in the workplace, and as an early proponent of what emerged as a British pluralist approach to industrial relations. It was a tradition that recognised differences of interest in the workplace, but saw compromise as preferable and attainable. These ideas can be attributed, to a large extent, to his Quaker beliefs, which focused on treating all employees with honesty and integrity, valuing justice and fair play in the workplace, and promoting peaceful working relationships. All of these values were based upon the central Quaker belief in 'that of God in everyone.' Taken together they amounted to something that I refer to as a 'covenantal' relationship in the workplace, one based on the essential worth of everyone, and the belief that everyone has something useful to contribute (Kimberley, 2013a).

Before moving on to the central thrust of the thesis, a brief biography of Edward Cadbury's life will help set the scene. This will then be followed by an explanation of the methodology employed in the thesis.

Biography of Edward Cadbury

This section draws upon my previously published work (Kimberley, 2016c, 2019b). Edward Cadbury was born 20 March 1873 at 32 George, Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. He

was the eldest son of George Cadbury the chocolate manufacturer. The Cadbury family were all Quakers, and had a long tradition of public service. Edward was to continue that tradition, and make his mark as a progressive employer and champion of women in the workplace. When Edward was eight years old the family moved to Woodbrooke, Selly Oak, and in 1884 his grandmother, Gulielma Taylor, spent a month with the family and kept a diary. On Saturday 24 May she wrote:

> Edward, now over eleven years old, much improved in health and physique since I saw him last year. He goes daily to a school for gentlemen's sons at Harborne, kept by the vicar's wife...dines there at one, gets home to tea about 6 o' clock, very ready for a hearty meal. He plays cricket and football at school, and often has a game at home with his father and Georgie (his younger brother) and Tom Cooper, a young clerk at Bournville. Also on his pony accompanies his papa in a ride before breakfast and all this outdoor life is helping no doubt to lay the foundations of a strong man.... Heard George and Ted on their steeds as I lay in bed, and saw Ted after breakfast marching off to school, whistling like a happy school boy
> (quoted in Crosfield, 1985, p. 517).

This tells us that Edward had something of a privileged upbringing, no doubt typical of the sons and daughters of successful employers like George Cadbury. Later, Edward went on to a Quaker boarding school at Oliver's Mount, Scarborough. He then completed his education with further study in London and Germany, before joining his father at the Bournville works in 1893. He began his working life by gaining experience in a number of different departments at the Bournville plant.

Cadbury was a short, stocky man, and had a good sense of humour. This no doubt stood him in good stead during his career in the family company, which appeared to be substantial.

> He was a very able business man and probably the main driving force in Cadbury Brothers when his father became older. However he always seemed to be in perfect harmony with his bothers and cousins. He was strongly influenced by his father to become a Christian idealist, whose main purpose in life was to improve the lot of those people less fortunate than himself (Crosfield, 1985, p. 518).

This idea that Edward Cadbury was something of a Christian idealist will be touched on again later when considering Cadbury's written work. The intellectual environment of the time was strongly influenced by the English idealist and Christian, T H Green, and Cadbury seemed to fit comfortably within that philosophical tradition. Crosfield also notes Edward as being the main driving force in the company, although this could make him difficult to work with. He arrived at decisions quickly, and was equally quick at wanting to implement them. Timekeeping was very important to Edward, and he was never known to be late for an appointment. This made for a highly pressured working environment, and those working with him could find it a difficult pace to keep up with. He was drawing on his own

experience when he wrote to his nephew identifying the qualities necessary for a successful business career:

> Firstly, strength of character and high purpose in life. Secondly, the ability to concentrate on the work and problems before you. Thirdly, initiative, resource and not being afraid to take risks and make mistakes. Fourthly, and this is an extremely important thing if one is to be successful, sufficient humility to be willing at all times to listen and to learn from the experience and opinion of others
> (quoted in Crosfield, 1985, p. 519).

Up until 1899 the Cadbury company had been a partnership between Edward's father George, and George's brother, Richard. But in March of that year, Richard died in Jerusalem whilst on a trip to the Holy Land. George then formed a private limited company, with himself as chairman. Edward and his brother George Junior, together with Richard's sons, Barrow and William, became managing directors. All were deeply committed Quakers. For the next twenty years these five effectively ran the company, and grew it to become one of the largest companies in the UK (2685 employees in 1899, and 7501 in 1919). Edward's responsibilities were mainly twofold: exports and specific responsibility for female staffing in the company. Managing the women in the company was a responsibility that Cadbury took very seriously, and it was one in which he was to excel. He had responsibility for the women's departments in the firm from 1899 to 1919, and a large part of the success of the company during this period was down to his efficient and skilful management of the women. Throughout this period, the number of women employees in the company always exceeded those of men (Williams, 1931, p. 276).

But Cadbury's vision looked to improve the lot of women in the workplaces beyond Bournville, and early on he set about doing what he could to advance their position and status. To begin doing this, he used Birmingham as the city in which to conduct a large-scale piece of research into the working lives of working-class women. This research found its way into Edward's first book, *Women's Work and Wages* (Cadbury, Matheson and Shann, 1906). Although often overlooked, this is a major piece of social research in the tradition of the Webb's and Charles Booth. The aims of the investigation were fourfold:

1. To give a complete survey of the conditions under which women are earning a livelihood
2. To provide some definite standard of comparison so that future investigators may be able to ascertain what progress has been made
3. To ascertain to what extent the present industrial and social conditions are helping forward or retarding the physical, mental and moral condition of the workforce
4. To indicate upon what lines they think reformers will obtain the best results in their attempts to raise and brighten the lives of those who are the future mothers of our race (Cadbury, Matheson and Shann, 1906, p. 12).

The Quaker influence is already evident in the third aim, where concern is expressed for the "moral condition of the workforce." The data for the book came from a staggering range of material and interviews. 6000 working women were interviewed, and about 400 managers, foremen and trade union officers, as well as correspondence with members and officers of women's organisations and employers (Cadbury, Matheson and Shann, 1906, p. 14).

This impressive piece of social research by Cadbury, Matheson and Shann, formed the basis for a pro-women policy that was developed by Cadbury over the next fifteen years, and was put to good use in the family firm. By the early 1920s, Cadbury was widely viewed as a firm that was at the forefront of progressive management practice, most of it placing a special emphasis on improving the conditions of women in work and society. As regards Cadbury's fellow authors, Marie Cecile Matheson (1870 – 1950) was joint Warden at Birmingham Women's Settlement, along with Catherine Albright, a Quaker. Matheson was a prominent member of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies later in life, and also lectured on social economics for the Delegacies of Extra-Mural Studies at Oxford and Cambridge universities, as well as serving on a number of Industrial Trade Boards (Matheson, 1907 – 17). George Shann (1876 – 1919) grew up in Bradford, but moved to Birmingham in 1904. He was the first secretary of the National Anti-Sweating League, was a member of the Workers Union, and was also a member of the Independent Labour Party (ILP), for whom he was elected a member of Birmingham City Council in 1911. Shann found himself at odds with the ILP when he supported Britain's entry into the First World War, and resigned from the party. He joined up and served overseas, but shortly after the end of the War died from an illness on 2 January 1919 (Martin, 1974).

Following quickly on the heels of *Women's Work and Wages*, Cadbury co-authored another book, this time on the theme of 'sweating'. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the sweated trades were one of the most pressing problems around. Trade union and religious leaders were prominent in their efforts to raise the issue with those in authority, and it was kept in the public eye by organs like the *Daily News*, which organised the 'Sweated Industries Exhibition' in London (Mudie-Smith, 1906). The *Daily News* was owned by George Cadbury, Edward's father, and both men played prominent parts in organising the Exhibition, as well being enthusiastic participants in the Anti-Sweating League. *Sweating* (1907), by Edward Cadbury and George Shann, was more of an overt political tract than that of *Women's Work and Wages*. It provided something of a systematic attack on the sweated trades, with the explicit purpose of bringing about the necessary improvement in working conditions through government legislation. The sweated trades shared a common set of conditions: a) a particularly low level of pay, b) excessive hours of labour and c) insanitary workplace conditions. Echoing the debates of more recent times, the 'living wage' was an important part of the discussion, the authors rejecting the idea of a minimum or subsistence wage (Kimberley, 2013b). Cadbury was already advocating the importance of the essentials for a decent life, as recorded in *Women's Work and Wages*, and these thoughts were well amplified in the *Sweating*

handbook (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, p. 3). The authors concluded their argument by advocating Wages Boards to establish minimum pay levels in the sweated trades. Work on establishing minimum pay levels had already been carried out by the Liberal MP Sir Charles Dilke, who had drawn up a Bill to bring about Wages Boards. An amended Bill was drawn up by the Anti-Sweating League, which advocated a compulsory minimum wage in trades like tailoring, dressmaking and the other sweated trades. This was to eventually find its way on to the statute book in the form of the Trade Boards Act 1909. Although its range of powers was limited, it was nevertheless effective in raising living standards and reducing poverty, particularly among women. Cadbury and his father can take some credit for their efforts in bringing this about.

Two features often overlooked in Cadbury's work with and on behalf of working people were in the fields of pensions and housing. Up until 1908 the state provided nothing for older people. Cadbury, and his father, believed that state pensions should be available for those aged 60 and above. Along with the social reformer, Charles Booth, they founded the National Old Age Pension League, with the Cadbury family putting up half the funding. Cadbury became treasurer of the National Committee of Organised Labour for Promoting Old Age Pensions for All, often shortened to the National Committee of Organised Labour. Eventually, after a long campaign, the Old Age Pensions Act was passed through parliament in 1908. For his efforts, Edward Cadbury's name appears on a tablet in Browning Hall, London, commemorating the passing of the Act (*The Times,* 1 January, 1944, p. 7). The second area was housing, and Cadbury became one of the original trustees of the Bournville Village Trust in 1900, taking a particularly active part in its future development. He was also an original director of the First Garden City Limited at Letchworth, serving on its Board from 1903 to 1919. He expressed his principles clearly:

> The Bournville Trustees did not build houses to suit a starvation wage; they believed that there was enough wealth in the country to enable a man who did an honest day's work to demand a wage which would not only feed, but also house him and his family in comfort and decency. The Trustees believed it to be most important that the residents in Bournville should not be restricted to one class, or to the employees of one firm, and they endeavoured to foster independence and to avoid paternalism (quoted in Crosfield, 1985, p. 525).

It is important to take note here of the reference to 'avoiding paternalism', as this was a charge Cadbury always rejected. This will be returned to later in the thesis, as I go on to argue, like Crosfield and *contra* others such as Windsor (1980) and Rowlinson (1988), that paternalism misconstrues the nature of the Cadbury approach to its workforce.

As already noted, during the later years of the nineteenth century, Cadbury seemed to become increasingly concerned with the plight of working-class women, and particularly their role in the workplace. Birmingham, like most industrial cities in the UK, began developing a strong and vibrant labour movement in this period. Alongside a range of trade

unions and a strong Trades Council, there was a multiplicity of groups, including the ILP and Social Democratic Federation (SDF). Another such body was the Birmingham Socialist Centre. The idea behind the Centre was to act as a forum to unite and unify socialists in the Midlands. The Centre began in 1897, but little material seems to exist before the Fourth Annual Report of April 1901, when Edward Cadbury was listed as a member. He seems to have been a keen and enthusiastic member, as he is recorded in official records a number of times before the Centre closed, just after the outbreak of World War One. Cadbury is recorded as chairing one of the Autumn Lectures in 1903 (*EC Minutes,* Monday 14 September, 1903), and in the Ninth Annual Report of April 1906, the book Cadbury co-authored with George Shann and M Cecile Matheson, *Women's Work and Wages*, is referred to as "an important book by two of our members" (the other member being Shann). The Eleventh Annual Report refers to a 'Sweating' trades conference at Bingley Hall in Birmingham, where reference is also made to the book *Sweating*, co-authored by Cadbury and Shann. The Twelfth Annual Report thanks Cadbury for the "generous" entertainment provided by him for the annual gathering. In August 1911 Cadbury gave the Centre £100 to use in publicising poor wages in the locality, and the Sixteenth Annual Report recognises and promotes Cadbury's final book, *Experiments in Industrial Organization* (1912). The Birmingham Socialist Centre closed at the outbreak of World War One, but it seems to have done a useful job of work during its existence. Given that Edward's involvement in the Socialist Centre covered at least 12 years, this demonstrates his strong commitment to politically radical reforms. This small archive appears to be a completely neglected area of Cadbury's life, and adds further insight to his willingness to embrace labour and trade union ideas.

Experiments in Industrial Organization (1912) was the effective culmination of his major writing, and was his magnum opus. The Bournville plant of the Cadbury company had something of an experimental character about it, and this was something completely consistent with the Quakerism of the time. The desire to create and innovate was widespread and compelling, resulting in many new ideas and initiatives taking place. *Experiments in Industrial Organization* is Cadbury's summary of the initiatives that had been introduced at the firm in the field of labour management. He begins the book by outlining the principle that underlines much of the thinking behind his experimental and innovative approach to labour management:

> The supreme principle has been the belief that business efficiency and the welfare of the employees are but different sides of the same problem.....The test of any scheme of factory organization is the extent to which it creates and fosters the atmosphere and spirit of co-operation and goodwill, without in any sense lessening the loyalty of the worker to his own class and its organizations
> (Cadbury, 1912, Introduction).

Once again, we note Cadbury rejected any notion of this being a company that adopted a narrow social control paternalistic approach, i.e. one that attempted to dilute the loyalty of

the worker to his class and his trade union. The book is very comprehensive, in that it deals with the responsibilities of the employer to the employee throughout his working life and beyond. So, early sections identify the system by which the company designed and implemented a recruitment and selection process that did its best to employ staff who were most appropriate and best suited to the needs of the company. In turn, the company then grew and developed their staff through a package of education, training, sports, and welfare provision that was well ahead of most employers in the UK.

An interesting facet of Cadbury's support for women in the workplace was his collaboration with Julia Varley. Varley had been born in Bradford in 1871, and seemed to have something of a radical streak in her, as she joined the Weavers and Textile Workers' Union and became the Bradford branch secretary at the age of 15. Varley widened her trade union activities, becoming the first female member of Bradford Trades Council. Alongside serving on the executive of the Trades Council from 1899 to 1906, Varley also served two short periods of imprisonment in Holloway prison for suffragette activity. Later, Varley came to the attention of Cadbury after she became involved with Mary Macarthur's National Federation of Women Workers (NFWW). He invited Varley to form a branch of the NFWW at Bournville, and supported her in the promotion of trade unionism among women in Birmingham and the Black Country. Her enthusiasm and commitment to trade unionism was quickly demonstrated when she joined Birmingham Trades Council as the Bournville delegate of the NFWW. Almost immediately, she became a member of the Executive in January 1910, which allowed her to get further involved in Birmingham struggles over pay and working conditions (Corbett, 1966, p. 92). Disputes in the baking and brick-making industries received her support; she even used the pages of the Cadbury company magazine, the *Bournville Works Magazine*, to publicise their plight (*BWM,* June, 1912, pp. 172 – 3). In so doing, the support of Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury family was plain for all to see.

Varley's most celebrated work at this time was her support for the Cradley Heath women chain-makers. Chain-making was one of the 'sweated' trades, and officially covered by the Trade Boards Act 1909, but the employers were getting around this by using a contracting-out arrangement (*BWM,* November, 1910, pp. 412 – 13). Edward Cadbury had already demonstrated his opposition to the 'sweated' trades, and helped Varley in her efforts to improve conditions for the Cradley chain-makers. The women eventually refused *en masse* to sign up to the contracting-out arrangements, and the employers organised a lock-out. Cadbury was reported as agreeing to contribute £5 per week to the women for the duration of the strike (*The Times*, 2 September, 1910). The dispute was protracted, but the employers conceded defeat after nine weeks. Varley went on to greater heights later in life, becoming full time Women's Organiser for the Workers Union, and then for the Transport and General Workers' Union after a merger in 1929. An OBE followed in 1931. Just before the end of her life, Varley reminisced about her time with Edward Cadbury, and in particular his support for the women chain-makers of Cradley:

> Mr Edward did more for them than he cared to have known. He gave me money to help the poorer women, and the women at Bournville collected hundreds of pounds. They were the finest friends of the people among whom I was working. They really were angels of mercy (*BWM*, June, 1951, p. 80).

Another area of Cadbury's life that receives little attention is his work to bring about a professional and wide-ranging approach to labour management in the workplace. In 1909 Cadbury organised a conference at Fircroft, a former Cadbury home in Bournville. This conference seems to have been the first formal meeting of the group of staff and employers that went on to form the Welfare Workers' Association, the forerunner of the present-day Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (*The Times,* 13 September, 1909, p. 7). Over the previous decade there had been rapid developments in welfare provision, and Quaker companies had been at the forefront of these developments. The conference took place from September 10th to the 13th, and many well-known companies were represented – Crosfield's of Warrington, Reckitts of Hull, Jacob's of Dublin, Colman's of Norwich, Chivers of Cambridge, Lever Brothers of Port Sunlight, Rowntree's of York and Cadbury's of Bournville. The Principal Lady Inspector of Factories, Adelaide Anderson, was also in attendance.

Cadbury organised the conference to promote and encourage the exchange of information among interested parties. Many papers were read and discussed, covering a wide-range of welfare topics. Anderson read a paper on the length of the working day and its impact on worker stress and fatigue. Cadbury read a paper describing the principles of welfare work, illustrated with examples from Bournville. The moral dimension was well represented at the conference, as there were two papers on thrift. Miss Wood of Rowntree's spoke on the importance of encouraging the habit of saving, particularly in young people, and Mrs Gaze of Colman's spoke on the sensible spending of money. Some discussion took place on the moral and educational value of physical exercise, and the importance of further education was widely promoted. George Shann concluded the conference by reading a paper on the important relationship between welfare and social reform. Although the conference did not lead to the immediate formation of a professional body for personnel managers, it was an important beginning. So important, in fact, that Adelaide Anderson the Principal Lady Inspector of Factories described it as "a step of some consequence to the movement" (Niven, 1967, p. 31).

Cadbury was to complete 50 years of service with the family company when he retired in 1943. Although his principal social concern always remained to improve the lot of women in the workplace, his working life assumed many other responsibilities. As already noted, in 1899 the family business became a limited liability company on the death of Cadbury's uncle, Richard. Cadbury, along with his brother, George Junior, and Richard's two sons, William and Barrow, became Managing Directors, with George Senior as the Chairman of the company. For many years Cadbury was head of the Women's Departments in the works, being succeeded in this role by his cousin, Dorothy, in 1919 (Kimberley, 2016a).

Nevertheless, he remained actively engaged with this section of the workforce, remaining management side Chairman of the Women's Works Council from its inception in 1918 until his retirement in 1943. Until 1927 he was Head of the Export Department, and was also the director mainly responsible for Advertising, Finance and Planning. When the Fry Company joined with the Cadbury Company, he became a director of the newly formed British Cocoa and Chocolate Co. Ltd., and in 1932 became Chairman of Cadbury Brothers Ltd., and Chairman of the Board in 1937. He was also Chairman of The Daily News Ltd. from 1911 until 1930.

Despite his business activities, Cadbury seemed to find plenty of time to foster and promote a range of just causes. With his father, George senior, Edward took a leading part in the movement for the introduction of state superannuation allowances, which led to the passing of the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908. Reference has already been made to the Daily News 'sweated trades' exhibition, which Edward promoted and which eventually led to Winston Churchill introducing the minimum wage legislation, via the Trade Boards Act of 1909. He supported education in all its forms, and made many gifts to Birmingham University and to the Selly Oak Colleges. But perhaps his most enduring feature was his lifelong Quakerism. Although his Quakerism was often understated, his faith remained strong. He began the Selly Oak Meeting in 1894, and was Clerk to the Meeting until 1901, and then went on to build the new Meeting house in 1926. The service he gave throughout his life was an outpouring of Quaker belief and practice, and this was to be found in all he did, be it in the workplace, or beyond.

Edward Cadbury died in an Edgbaston nursing home on Sunday 21st November, 1948. The cremation took place at the Lodge Hill cemetery, Selly Oak, Birmingham on 24th November. Memorial services were held at the George Cadbury Hall and at Woodbrooke Quaker College. He was survived by his wife, Dorothy. Given his commitment to improving the lives of his employees, it is fitting that a final word should be left to that of his employees, contained in a letter sent by the Works Council to Cadbury's wife, Dorothy:

> We write this morning on behalf of all employed at Bournville Works to express our deepest sympathy in this time of bereavement. The sad news has shrouded the works in sadness. It is difficult to believe that every office and department which bore the imprint of Mr Edward's personality and devoted service will see him no more. Those who have been largely concerned with factory problems remember with gratitude the beneficent schemes which he promoted, the problems he solved, the difficulties he eased. He has left hosts of friends everywhere who carry, with joy and admiration, many sunny memories, and who realise what a privilege they enjoyed in knowing Edward Cadbury. His life will be recorded as that of a great Christian leader – a fighter for the weak, a champion for the oppressed, a pioneer for progress, a lover of mankind, a happy servant of God. We know and value the way in which you were able to share his thoughts, aspirations and interests. Today and always we shall remember him (*BWM*, December, 1948).

Before moving on to the literature review and providing the necessary context to the research, there is first a need to provide a note on methods and sources. The research covers work in the disciplines of both history and the social sciences, and as they have different methodological traditions, some explanation of the approach employed in this research is needed.

b) Methods and Sources

Introduction and research strategy

My approach to researching the Cadbury company, and in particular Edward Cadbury, will concentrate on providing an outline of the key features of his life and work, including those features that involve answering the questions posed in the 'Introduction'. In that sense, it will be something of a 'nuts and bolts' type of methodological approach (Ackers, 2016, Note 1), one that draws upon the data and information that will best help to produce a rounded picture of Edward Cadbury and his management philosophy; the management philosophy he developed whilst running a very successful confectionary business. Although Edward Cadbury will be the lead actor in the unfolding narrative, the Board as a whole (all family members) shared the same commitment and vision for the company and workplace practices that emerged.

Although adopting something of a 'nuts and bolts' type of methodological approach, it must nevertheless be framed within an overall research strategy. In doing so, I will follow the approaches recommended in the works of Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) and Saunders, Thornhill and Lewis (2019). As such, this will first involve making clear my underlying philosophical assumptions in doing the research. Essentially, such a philosophy of social science will involve addressing three particular spheres of activity:

> ontology—our understanding of what reality is; epistemology—our understanding of how we can know reality; and methodology or research strategy—our understanding of the best way to do research given our ontological and epistemological assumptions (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019, p. 26).

Ontology divides into two main categories, objectivism and constructivism. Objectivism suggests all social phenomena have an objective reality, independent of us as observers. Constructivism, on the other hand, sees social phenomena as socially constructed, and, as such, can be regularly revised. This research will adopt a predominantly constructivist approach. In providing an example of this, I will be interpreting the Cadbury company and its development between 1899 and 1919 through the lives of Edward Cadbury, and his fellow directors, all committed Quakers. This provides a different understanding of the way in which the company developed, as compared with the business case provided by a commentator like Rowlinson (1988).

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge, and follows, to a degree, from one's ontological position. The positivism paradigm suggests we should use similar methods to those of the natural sciences in studying social phenomena, principally the gathering together of facts. This would follow logically the objectivism strand of ontology. The main alternative is interpretivism, which follows logically the social constructivist ontology, believing that reality is made up of human action and the meaning attached to those actions. As this research is essentially historical, an example of this focus on human action and meaning is my interpretation of Edward Cadbury's views on industrial relations in the period under review. Cadburys' own words will be used liberally to provide the necessary examples.

Given these ontological and epistemological assumptions, my research strategy sits within the qualitative tradition, and will employ an inductive approach to gather the necessary evidence. This will involve trying to understand how Cadbury interpreted his social world, recognising Cadbury was constantly interacting with his environment, this being displayed by his emphasis on 'experimentation' and innovation in the workplace and beyond. Of course, a research strategy of this kind necessarily involves the values and prior experience I bring to the research, and these need to be made explicit. The most obvious factor that needs to be made known is that I am a practising Quaker. This has clearly influenced me in my choice of subject, although being raised in Birmingham and being aware of the importance to the city of a company like Cadbury, has been important too. Being a Quaker means I have had to be reflexive in trying to acknowledge my Quakerism and its possible influence on the research, whilst at the same time trying to remain relatively independent in my assessment of the Cadbury approach. What has helped in this process is the recognition that the Quakerism of today is not the Quakerism of Edward Cadbury's time. In the thesis I trace through some of the changes in Quaker belief and behaviour over time, and since Edward Cadbury's time they have changed again. I have referred to the Quakerism of Cadbury's time as Liberal Quakerism, whereas today one could talk of a post-Liberal or even post-modernist form of Quakerism. To give an example, Edward Cadbury places women as having a central role in the family as wife and mother. This is most obviously the case in *Women's Work and Wages* (1906), but is demonstrated throughout all his work. This ideal of the nuclear family is less the case now, and certainly not the case among Quakers in today's world. A celebration of equality and diversity is much more the norm today, and it is notable that Quakers were the first religious group in the UK to celebrate same-sex marriages. This would have been inconceivable in Cadbury's time. It is this current mood of Quaker belief and practice that helps provide me with sufficient distance from the Quakerism of Cadbury's time to maintain a degree of relative independence when making judgements about the Cadbury Quaker approach to industrial relations.

Methodological approach

This research is interdisciplinary in that it overlaps two quite distinct disciplines. First, history, insofar as the research is mainly focused on the period 1899 to 1919, with only limited references outside that period. Second, social science, in that the research reviews labour relations and its development in the Cadbury company during the period 1899 to 1919. Today, labour relations comes within the broad field of Human Resource Management (HRM), and is referred to more commonly by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) as employee relations. But for my purposes, and for convenience, throughout the research I will use the terms 'employee relations', 'industrial relations', employment relations' and 'labour relations' interchangeably. As the research overlaps two separate disciplines, the methodology will be explained by referring to both disciplines. This is important because in recent years there has been discussion and debate between the two disciplines as to what is the most appropriate way to conduct research that incorporates both fields. So, for example, Gold (2017), in supporting Alan Fox's radical pluralist critique, suggests it can be used to scrutinise the employment relationship. Taking issue with this approach, Ackers highlights "a methodological divide between theoretically social science explanations and a more historical or empirical approach" (quoted in Gold, 2017, p. 157). Ackers notes the social science explanation focuses on the employment relationship, and describes it as structural sociology, whereas the empirical approach he calls historical institutionalism. Ackers goes further in suggesting that the 'employment relationship' is too broad a concept to be of value. In reply, Gold argues that Fox analysed the employment relationship both sociologically and historically, treating both approaches as two sides of the same coin. He ends by concluding:

> While sociology allows the elaboration of broad categories that focus on the common features of a phenomenon, history focuses on the detail and context. Fox treated the disciplines as complementary, not as mutually exclusive, and so revealed different types of insights depending.....on the strength of the magnifying glass (Gold, 2017, p. 157).

It has been natural for those of a historical hue to privilege the historical approach, rarely considering that there is much of a need to explain their methodology. The narrative form has been the most popular approach within historical research, and this customarily involves the use of archives. This lacks rigour in the eyes of those social scientists that prefer a positivistic approach. However, the positivistic view is not shared by all social scientists. An alternative interpretivist approach believes individuals exercise independent judgement and responsibility in their behaviour, and, as complex creatures, experience 'reality' differently. This, they believe, allows them to gain a deeper understanding of why people behave in the way they do. It is in this interpretivist approach that we can find some accommodation with the historical approach, and plot a way forward that will satisfy both traditions.

A methodology that incorporates both traditions

A common criticism of historical research by social scientists is that it lacks methodological transparency (Perchard, Mackenzie, Decker and Favero, 2017). It is suggested that historians rarely make clear how they have set about and completed their research. Historians would probably agree with this, instead suggesting that the strength of professional historians is in their capacity to analyse, evaluate and interpret the evidence. A recent comment by social historian Keith Thomas provides a good example of how he goes about research:

> to immerse myself in the past until I know it well enough for my judgement of what is or is not representative to seem acceptable without undue epistemological debate (Thomas, 2010).

This eclecticism, so often needed in good historical research, can be seen as lacking rigour by the social scientist. One helpful way forward is to make use of what is known within the social sciences as 'grounded theory':

> This is in fact what many historians do even if they do not describe it in this way. Grounded theory seeks to develop an apt framework out of the materials themselves and hence it is necessarily more pragmatic and flexible than adherence to a pre-existing theory (Jordanova, 2006, pp. 67-8).

In a recent discussion, one more in keeping with the research carried out for this thesis, Ackers (2016) draws attention to history as 'qualitative social science':

> ....there are close affinities between interpretive sociology, using qualitative social science methods and the usual historical approach. Both share the sense that people make society and focus on what Weber termed "actors social meanings"... ...Most history is essentially qualitative, in social science terms, because its mission is to understand better how people thought and behaved in the past (Ackers, 2016, p. 106).

Both these comments remind us that the gap between the social science and historical methodologies are not necessarily as far apart as is sometimes suggested. One way in which this gap can be reduced further, is by making use of Andrews and Burke's 'five C's: context, change over time, causality, complexity and contingency' (Andrews and Burke, 2007). Most of these are touched upon in good historical research, and here they will be made explicit, before using them instrumentally throughout the thesis. In introducing their approach, Andrews and Burke explain their thinking:

> The five C's do not encompass the universe of historical thinking, yet they do provide a remarkably useful tool for helping students at practically any level learn how to formulate and support arguments based on primary sources, as well as to understand and challenge historical interpretations related in secondary sources (Andrews and Burke, 2007).

This is the approach employed in this research. Recently, a sixth concept, 'comparison', has been identified as a possible addition (Gold, 2021). Inevitably there is some overlap in the coverage of each of these concepts, as no one concept is discrete. Instead, they are part of an overall schema that provides the necessary backdrop to the period. The first, *change over time*, is, to a degree, relatively straightforward. We all acknowledge change in our lives, particularly in the workplace. This was evident in Cadbury's time too. The 1899 – 1919 period introduced significant change in the political, economic and social life of Britain, and these left their mark on the company. Specific examples in the thesis will include the way in which employee voice developed in the company during this period. Alongside encouraging and supporting trade union membership in the company, as for example when Julia Varley was brought in by Edward Cadbury to organise women workers in the company (p. 30), there was also the introduction of a Suggestion Scheme in 1902, Shop Committees in 1905, and Works Councils in 1918, all designed to enhance employee voice in the workplace (pp. 122 - 136). Further examples of change over time are included in 'Birmingham Quakerism in the early twentieth century' (pp. 37-44) and 'Birmingham background and industrial relations' (pp. 44-56), both in Section One,

Andrews and Burke suggest history is about telling stories, good stories being dependent on providing *context*, our next concept. Some attempt at re-creating the period 1899-1919 is necessary, and this has been done by providing two frameworks to add texture: the Birmingham industrial environment (pp. 44-56) and the Quaker environment (pp. 37-44). To provide specific examples, the first is of the Adult Schools, supported and encouraged enthusiastically by all Cadbury's. It was noted that many of the improvements introduced into the company in the 1899-1919 period had first been used in the Adult Schools (p. 38). A second example is the Women's Social Service League. Here we find something quite extraordinary, a group of women workers at the Cadbury Bournville plant, being encouraged and supported by their employer, Edward Cadbury, to go and organise women workers in Birmingham factories into the appropriate trade union (pp. 52 - 55).

Causality is an interesting concept in the field of history. As we are addressing the past, it would be difficult to trace through a *direct* cause and effect of an event or incident. Nevertheless, we *can use* causality in the sociological sense of structural influences and tendencies. So, in the thesis I will make good use of the impact of Quakerism on Edward Cadbury and his approach to industrial relations. This can be found most obviously in the section on 'Birmingham Quakers in the early twentieth century' (pp. 37-44), which provides a range of examples of Quakerism and the way in which it was being practised by Edward Cadbury and the Quakers in this period. Further examples can be found in 'Covenant – A Quaker approach to industrial relations' (pp. 180 – 185)

Andrews and Burke remind us that the world is messy, and any attempt at producing worthwhile history needs to engage with such turmoil, hence their reference to *complexity*. Achieving analytical rigour requires effort, and engaging with the notion of 'complexity'

helps us achieve a degree of rigour in our work. The period 1899-1919 was a period of considerable upheaval in the political, economic and social firmament of Britain, not simply during the First World War. The turn of the century produced debate over the Boer War (1899-1902). The war was something to which George Cadbury Snr. was very much opposed, and ended up buying *The Daily News*, partly at the behest of Lloyd George, to promote opposition to the war (Gardiner, 1923, p. 213). The new Liberal governments of 1906 – 15 were radical and reforming, and all the Cadbury's supported this change of direction in Liberal politics. Edward Cadbury had shown his support in his campaigning to eradicate the sweated trades and his support for good quality housing for all and Old Age Pension provision (p. 7). It is worthwhile noting that these activities were tangential to the work of Cadbury as a progressive employer, although a very necessary part of his life as a committed Quaker. These are further examples of the way in which Cadbury engaged with the wider world of his day.

Contingency encourages using the view that individuals shape the course of events, and, in so doing, counters any suggestions of structuralist teleology. Edward Cadbury was part of a phase of Quakerism that was modernist in approach and liberal in interpretation. This emerged in Cadbury as a flowering of experiment and innovation at the Bournville plant, which produced the many employee benefits during this period. These are referred to instrumentally throughout the thesis, but specific attention to one avenue of employee voice is the section on Shop Committees and Works Councils (pp. 122-136). The sixth and final concept or idea is *comparison*. Comparison is most obviously demonstrated throughout the thesis when I regularly compare the industrial relations approach of Cadbury to that of paternalism, pluralism and scientific management. This is a central element of the research, and drawing out these comparisons helps in identifying Cadbury's approach as somewhat different to those other approaches, as well as being progressive and sitting squarely within an approach that I believe to be 'Quakerly', and one that I have labelled 'covenantal'. Adding these six 'C's' to an interpretivist approach helps establish a methodology that incorporates both historical and social science traditions.

What kind of historical research?

My research into the management practices that emerged in the Cadbury company explores three main avenues. First, the research will situate Edward Cadbury as the central figure in the Cadbury company during this period. This is not because Edward Cadbury was alone in developing the management strategy at the company, for alongside him on the Board he had his father, brother and two cousins, always encouraging, helping and supporting him at all times. But he was undoubtedly the key instigator, as well as chronicler, of the company's 'experiments' and innovations, as already noted by Crosfield (1985). It is in this sense that the research will retain something of a biographical approach. Second, the research will help illuminate the distinctive ideas and practices of the Cadbury approach towards human resource management, and is therefore also an intellectual

history. Particular emphasis will be placed on the intellectual development of Edward Cadbury as an early British management thinker. Important in this regard, will be Edward Cadbury's approach to women workers and their particular needs in the workplace and beyond. A third area is that of business history (Rowlinson, 2005). This will not entail traditional business history, in that it will not be looking deeply into the development of the company as an organisation, or indeed its overall strategy. Instead, it will cover the development of a people management approach that emerged in the company, an approach that, once developed, changed little over the next 50 years. This was a business that compared well with much of what was going on in other large firms of the period, and included a people management strategy that was well ahead of its time. We should not forget that this was a mass production company with a large workforce operating in competitive markets, with all the temptations of travelling the road of 'scientific management,' popularised at the time by the efficiency expert, Frederick Taylor (Taylor, 1911), whose ideas Cadbury explicitly rejected in *Experiments in Industrial Organization*. 'Efficiency' was a keen idea of the time, and all firms tried to remain competitive. But Cadbury refused to succumb to the worst excesses of scientific management, instead designing a people management programme that stood it in good stead for the next half century.

Sources

It is now necessary to provide some explanation of the sources, and the way in which this research was carried out. To provide myself with something of a framework, I've initially drawn upon the work of Kipping, Wadhwani and Bucheli (2014), who draw our attention to the importance of three factors: source criticism, triangulation and hermeneutics. Given that historical sources are produced in a different time and context, and are always incomplete, source criticism is an important part of historical methodology because it helps us establish the validity and credibility of those sources. The validity of a source is determined by analysing the circumstances of its production and preservation. Its provenance, intended audience and purpose will also be important. To provide an example, in the Cadbury archive, the board minutes were written by one of the directors at the meeting, and would have been for record purposes, as there would have been no expected audience beyond themselves. As regards credibility, this involves assessing the reliability or trustworthiness of a source when addressing the research question. The principle criterion here is that the closer the source is to the action or event being explained, the more credible it is likely to be. The authority and perspective of the author of the source denotes the level of trustworthiness too (Kipping, Wadhwani and Bucheli, 2014, pp. 314-5).

A second element of importance, is the idea of 'triangulation'. Within the discipline of history, this usually involves the use of multiple data, and can be something of a 'mixed method' approach. This research has used primary as well as secondary material produced by different authors with different motives and perspectives (e.g. Board minutes would be

produced for the Board alone, Birmingham Socialist Centre minutes would be circulated to all individual members, like Edward Cadbury, and Quaker material like the *Handbook of the Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends* (1908) would be available to all Quakers in the country). Integrating these through a process of analysis and interpretation should help overcome the limitations of a particular source. In effect, this is the third essential element of importance, the hermeneustic perspective, which situates the historical evidence in its social, cultural and historical conditions.

The paper by Mackenzie, Pittaki and Wong (2019) provides further interest, in that it touches on biography and prosopography, as well as historical research in business and organisation studies. Whilst looking into the field of hospitality management and tourism, they set their approach within the Andrews and Burke five C typology, already noted above (pp. 15 – 17). They also draw attention to the Kipping, Wadhwani and Bucheli three-stage process of source criticism, triangulation and hermeneutic interpretation, also referenced above (p. 18). In conclusion, they believe "historical approaches offer the dual benefit of both transparency in data and methodological rigour allowing for a more complete approach" (Mackenzie, Pittaki and Wong, 2019, p. 13).

Although in recent years, 'post-modernist' historians question the very notion of 'sources', seemingly suggesting that much history can be described as 'fiction' (White, 1987), most professional historians view the sources with huge respect. There are some historians, like Jordanova, who alert us to the dangers of treating the sources with something approaching a 'fetish' (Jordanova, 2006, p. 161), but most see them as the bread and butter of historical research. Although in many senses there is a degree of simplicity about the sources, most of them being separated into 'primary' and 'secondary' evidence, Jordanova reminds us there is still plenty of work to do. There still remains the task of a) identifying the relevant sources, b) reading them accurately and critically, and finally c) evaluating and integrating them into a historical account (Jordanova, 2006, p. 159). These are clearly skills that are developed by historians over time, and will become familiar with practice.

In essence, my approach to the research will draw mainly upon a historical methodology that also incorporates the Andrews and Burke five C's framework to help me make sense of Edward Cadbury and his approach to the workplace. In doing so, I will make reference to Quakerism as the principal religious influence on Edward and the rest of the family, and also to the Birmingham industrial relations scene, another prism through which Edward's workplace approach was permeated. The material will be mainly of the published primary kind, although there will be unpublished sources from the Cadbury archive too. Secondary sources will include commentary from a range of authors in the fields of biography, history and social science. It should be noted that the Cadbury archive has not been digitalised. There is a catalogue of material that is available to consult, and a simple request is made for anything that seems appropriate and relevant. The archivist will advise,

but it is only possible to judge the relevance of the material once brought by the archivist to appraise. As such, it could be a time-consuming process, although the library staff were always very helpful and efficient, and produced material quickly and without fuss. The Cadbury Board minutes (1899 – 1919) were available here, as were the Works Council minutes (1918 – 19). Copies of the relevant issues of the *Bournville Works Magazine* (1902 – 19) were also available in the Cadbury library. This primary published material was on the open shelves in the library, and was therefore more easily accessible. The most obvious material that was not available, were papers relating to Edward Cadbury. There appears to be no archive of his personal papers available either in the Cadbury archives or those of Birmingham Central Library. Birmingham Central Library archives supplied primary material, including minutes and annual reports, of the Birmingham Socialist Centre (1901 – 1913). Accessing Birmingham Central Library archives was a much more time-consuming affair than at Cadbury. Although an online catalogue is available, requests for material must be made well in advance, and then you are given a day and time when it will be available to view. Primary published material included the three books either written or co-authored by Edward Cadbury, as well as his contribution to the Sociological Society Symposium on 'Scientific Management'. These are reasonably widely available in the archives as well as in well-stocked libraries. Other material published in or around the time period covered in the thesis (1899 – 1919), and therefore considered to be primary published material, is contained in the bibliography and notes. A range of secondary material referred to in the thesis is also included in the bibliography and notes, although two items should be considered of particular importance: *The Life of George Cadbury* (1923) and *The Firm of Cadbury 1831* – 1931 (1931). Both were published just outside the time period under consideration, but covered the specific development of the Cadbury company during the period under review, and should therefore be noted.

Alongside this archival material, there is a good range of primary printed material produced by the company. First place amongst this material would be copies of the *Bournville Works Magazine* (already mentioned above, and Note 2). Although this is a company magazine, and therefore open to the accusation that it simply presents the views of the company, there is sufficient material in there to suggest this was not the case. For example, there is an interesting set of exchanges around trade unions, and their role in the company. In the letters page of the March 1911 issue, R Leonard of the Painters' Department posed the question 'Are you a trade unionist?'

> At a meeting of the Workers' Union recently held at Stirchley Institute a desire was evinced for the promotion of a greater spirit of cohesion amongst the semi-skilled and unskilled workers of the surrounding district.....The workers must all unite or be ground down by unscrupulous employers. Speaking at Sheffield on January 29th, the Archbishop of York said he would like to see "churchmen lead in trade unionism."".....Non-unionists join us and help to relieve your poorer brothers from the pressure of want and desperation, teach them to think and reason, raise them to

> stand upon their feet once more as liberated slaves, and the tyranny of their masters will soon pass away (*BWM*, March, 1911, p. 87).

This is stirring stuff, and hardly the kind of material that would find its way into the company magazine of a paternalistic company. As an adjunct, it is worth noting, once again, the extent to which active trade unionists in this period invoke the Church and Christianity in their pursuit of trade unionism. Plenty of trade unionists were practising Christians in the early Labour movement, and it is possible this may have been a factor in encouraging co-operative relationships between employer and worker at Cadbury. As Mayer noted:

> ....by 1914 the chief organ of the Labour movement was the Labour Party in Parliament, led by men like Lansbury, Henderson, Crooks, Macdonald, and Snowden, all in varying ways religious men. The appeal of the Labour Party in the early twentieth century came largely from its associations with that Anglican conscience which was still busy forming settlements and that Nonconformist conscience which was vocal in chapels and trade union branches throughout the industrial areas. (Mayer, 1967, p. 339)

In the next issue of the magazine, Herbert Hadley of the Machine Shop praised the remarks of R Leonard, going on to say: "Here the employee is free from the fear of being victimised on account of his trade union principles. Indeed, every encouragement is given to the Bournville workers to join some such society" (*BWM*, April, 1911, p. 118). This, of itself, is a very revealing comment – a company *encouraging* its workers to join a trade union! Further correspondence continued, and in the May 1911 issue of the magazine W Cook, secretary of the Builders Labourers' branch of the National Union of Gas Workers and General labourers, reported that his union had "for the past twenty years been engaged in an uphill fight against the sordid condition and low wages that at present prevail in this district" (p. 145), and appealed for support from the Bournville workers.

I should add that these were not isolated examples of trade unionists using the columns of the *Bournville Works Magazine* as a forum for discussion. Some years later, when the shop stewards movement was beginning to take hold in 1918, alongside the discussions in the magazine around shop stewards, the letters columns had correspondence with the strap lines 'Shop Stewards or Co-operative Committees?' (April, 1918, p. 90), 'Workers Unite!' (September, 1918, p. 216) and 'Clerks and Combination' (October, 1918, p. 240). These are important examples of trade unionism being afforded a platform for discussion and debate in the company, and effectively counteract any suggestion that the company was only interested in trade unions it could manage or control. From a research point of view, it highlights the importance of primary published material. Sometimes historians regard primary published material as less pure or useful than unpublished archival material, but the distinction "is less important than an overall assessment of the source's relevance to a given project and how well it is used" (Jordanova, 2006, p. 95). However, these sorts of exchanges are critical in building up a picture of the mood and temper in the

company in this period, and without them finding their way into the *Bournville Works Magazine*, they would be unavailable. There are also plenty of leaflets, pamphlets and documents that were produced by the company over the years, no doubt in part for publicity purposes, but nevertheless containing information and comment that throw light on the company and its views at the time (Williams, 1931, Appendix G).

Alongside this primary material, there is a range of secondary published material by a variety of commentators, but perhaps not as much as one would expect of a company with the profile of Cadbury. As already noted, there is no recent official history of the company, somewhat surprising given its size and importance over the years. Perhaps the most disappointing fact is that there appears to be no archive of Edward Cadbury's personal papers. Nothing of this nature seems to exist in the Cadbury archive, and my query to the Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust elicited the elliptical reply "there are no papers available for research purposes" (by email November, 2013), seemingly suggesting that any papers that might exist are unavailable for research purposes. There is an archive of material deposited in Birmingham Central Library that is primarily made up of the papers of Elizabeth Cadbury, Edward Cadbury's stepmother. But a search of both the paper and electronic indexes of the archive yielded precious few references to Edward that were relevant to this research. Nevertheless, there remains Edward's written work, three books, plus his participation in a symposium on 'Scientific Management', and a range of references to him in the *Bournville Works Magazine*. Beyond that there are references to him in the minutes of the Birmingham Socialist Centre, and, of course, the Board minutes. Along with other contemporary material from the period, there is clearly sufficient to provide a comprehensive picture of Edward, his views and beliefs, and the way in which he practised his views and beliefs in the workplace and beyond.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is worthwhile reiterating some of the benefits of the historical approach. The 20-year period covered in this thesis allows for the opportunity to investigate the company in some detail, whilst at the same time gaining an understanding of the growth and development of the company in a key period in its history. This will also help in demonstrating why key moments in the history of the company occurred, and the impact they had. Alongside this periodisation of the company, will be the opportunity to provide context. Cadbury as a company is synonymous with Bournville, the tract of land bought by George and Richard Cadbury in 1873 in order to develop the factory and the surrounding village (Williams, 1931). Now a suburb of Birmingham, Bournville and its people and culture were necessarily a product of Birmingham and its political, economic and social environment. Birmingham is the second largest city in the UK, but its background, growth and development was quite unlike that of any other major city in the UK. This unusual background, the product of small businesses and a strong Nonconformist tradition, helped produce an industrial relations environment in Birmingham considerably different to

that elsewhere (Fox, 1955). This unique background was to have a positive impact on employment relationships in the Cadbury company. Finally, the company developed a significant labour management strategy in the course of its 'experiments' at Bournville between 1899 and 1919. By the end of the First World War, Cadbury had effectively produced a people management strategy well in advance of the times, and one most clearly situated within the pluralist paradigm.

I will now turn to the background literature in the next section. This will first debate Cadbury as a company, drawing on the available literature. Second, there will be some consideration of the influence of Quakerism in the work of Edward Cadbury and his family. Whilst the Cadbury family are often referred to as Quakers, there is little serious consideration of Quakerism as a *faith* and the way in which it influenced their thinking and behaviour. Finally, another area often neglected, is the Birmingham industrial and industrial relations background and environment. This provided the essential working environment that Cadbury inherited, but set about changing in his own company to reflect his own views on industrial management.

Section One – Background Literature

Introduction

Having introduced the research question and main themes of the thesis, there is now a need to draw upon and review a range of literature that provides the necessary backdrop and context to the research. To begin with, there is a brief history of the Cadbury company leading up to the period I am covering. Then, three key areas will be explored: First, a review of the literature on the company, noting the limited published sources. Second, the Quaker context, particularly its Birmingham strain. Third, the Birmingham historical context and its peculiarities as an industrial city.

Brief history of the company up to 1899

It was in March 1824 when a young John Cadbury went into business as a tea and coffee dealer at 93 Bull Street in Birmingham. Not long after, he began experimenting with the grinding of coffee beans. It is from 1831 that the company records its beginnings, when it began manufacturing cocoa products in a warehouse in Crooked Lane, Birmingham. Benjamin, John's brother, joined the business in 1847, and the company name was changed to Cadbury Brothers. In the same year, the brothers moved to a larger factory in Bridge Street, Birmingham. By the mid-1850s, the business was beginning to falter due to family misfortune and the pressure of competition. Richard and George, John's sons, joined the company in 1850 and 1856 respectively, and injected some much-needed energy into the company. Benjamin left the company in 1860, and John handed control of the company to Richard and George in 1861. Although the early days were difficult, through hard work, discipline and some fortitude, they managed to keep the company going. Success followed, and with their Birmingham premises being too small, they decided to move to a large plot of land in the countryside, where the company could grow and expand unhindered.

The plot of land that came to be called Bournville, was originally called Bournbrook after Bournbrook Cottage, the solitary building on the site. The foundations for the factory were dug out in January, 1879, and the first train load of 230 workers arrived in September. In a review of the company in 1921, the growth of the company was indicated by employee numbers: 1861: 14; 1879: 230; 1889: 1,193; 1899: 2,685; 1909: 4,923; 1919: 7,501; 1921: 8,613. So, between 1861, the year Richard and George formed the partnership, and 1899, the year Richard died, the company had expanded its workforce from 14 to 2,685. Then, after Richard's death, George brought in Richard's two sons, William and Barrow, and his own two sons, Edward and George Junior, to form a Board of five, with himself as Chair. The company continued expanding, and from 2,685 in 1899, the company had reached 7,501 by 1919, the period covered by this thesis. These numbers indicate just how successful a business Cadbury was in this period, and also how effective the family were as businessmen. George and Richard saw the move to Bournville as 'the great experiment',

and that experiment continued for at least 40 years until 1919, by which time the company had introduced their last major employee innovation, Works Councils.

a) Debating Cadbury

Despite its profile in the annals of British industry, the Cadbury company has no recently published substantial history. Now part of the worldwide Kraft group, it is further submerged within the European operation, 'Mondelez'. The only standard or authorised history of the company was published in 1931 (Williams, 1931), although recent works by Smith et al (Smith, Child and Rowlinson, 1990) and Cadbury (Cadbury, 2009) cover a range of historical ground. The problem with the more recent publications is that they skew the material to cover specific questions. For example, Smith et al (1990) focus on how the company accommodated organisational change during the development and implementation of a capital investment programme through the 1970s and 1980s, and Cadbury (2009) is a wide-ranging look at the chocolate industry, ending with the hostile takeover of the company by the Kraft group. Neither provides a good insight into the company in the period I am researching, 1899 to 1919. The most recent volume on the company (Wordsworth, 2018), uses a lot of images and covers much well-trodden ground, as does the volume by Chinn (Chinn, 1998), so are of limited use for this research. For that we need to look at other published literature, as well as the archives.

Perhaps the first book to provide a careful and informed insight into the early developments at the Bournville site was *The Life of George Cadbury* (Gardiner, 1923). Published the year after Cadbury's death, it provides a sympathetic portrait of Cadbury. Gardiner had been the editor of the family owned newspaper, the *Daily News*, and had known Cadbury intimately for 20 years. Gardiner had access to Cadbury's papers, as well as the encouragement and support of Elizabeth, Cadbury's wife, and Edward, Cadbury's eldest son (Gardiner, 1923, p. ix). Although the finished biography is sympathetic, it is not hagiographic, and provides an insight into Cadbury's character, and what motivated him. Gardiner identified this early in the book:

> It was this sense of the overshadowing importance of human life that gave coherence and design to his career. His thought worked in unusual isolation and detachment from the conventions of his time and the axioms of others. In his personal relations he was the most companionable of men, simple, childlike and as devoid of intellectual pride as of caste feeling; but in the large matters of life he acted with entire independence of external opinion and prejudice. He arrived at his decisions by the 'inner light' which he accepted as the infallible guide of conduct, and with which he took counsel daily in quiet walks and moods of 'wise passiveness'. (Gardiner, 1923, pp. vii-viii)

This reference to the Quaker notion of 'inner light' (more properly referred to as the 'Inward Light'), is important because it sets the mood and tone for the central tenet of the Quaker message – a belief in the capacity of the 'Inward Light' to guide Quakers in their daily lives.

Cadbury relied on this practice to guide his decision-making, and it was one he shared with the rest of the board of directors, all being committed Quakers. As the board consisted only of family members, and was quite small at five, this facilitated ease and relative speed in decision-making. Furthermore, the board members met weekly, and all had specific responsibilities in the workplace, suggesting something of a 'hands-on' approach in the factory.

The biography includes much that is standard fare in such volumes, for example Cadbury's early life, the struggles and sacrifices needed to achieve success in the early days of the business, the transfer of the factory to the green field Bournville site, and, Cadbury's charitable endeavours throughout his life. But what *is* different, are two chapters on 'The making of wealth' and 'The spending of wealth'. These two chapters outline the moral and ethical approach of George Cadbury towards money, and hence represent a Quaker approach to money and its use in this period. Quakers have long had a text usually referred to as the 'Book of Christian Discipline', its purpose being to guide members in all aspects of their lives, not least trade and industry (Note 3). In the 1883 version, the most recent version available to George Cadbury, there were two sections on the 'Danger of making haste to be rich' and 'Honest industry with moderate profits' (Religious Society of Friends, 1883, pp 119-20). The Gardiner chapters were entirely consistent with these two sections. The chapter on the making of wealth noted that one of Cadbury's favourite sayings was that no man who fulfils all his obligations will be rich, and he did not believe that an act of benevolence disposed of that responsibility. The question for Cadbury always remained: 'How did you come by the money?' In order to execute his responsibilities, Cadbury began by remedying the evils within his gift: the evils of the factory system:

> When he died, the factory had become a positive benefit, a centre of hygiene and intellectual activity, a school of conduct and habit, and in special cases a redemptive agency. The negative had been reversed to positive (Gardiner, 1923, p. 96).

It is easy to see why Gardiner arrived at this conclusion, as it is entirely consistent with the answer George Cadbury provided to Bishop Gore, the Bishop of Birmingham, in 1906. Gore had been given responsibility by the Church of England Canterbury Convocation and House of Laymen (Carew Hughes, 2019) to prepare a report on 'How best to bring the moral principles of Christianity to bear upon certain social problems, and, amongst others, upon the problem of the accumulation and distribution of wealth' (Gardiner, 1923, p. 118). Cadbury had something of a friendship with Gore, and certainly respected him highly. He was asked to answer a series of questions by Gore, the third being: What is your theory of giving.....?

> Begin at home with your workpeople, see to their comfort, health, and so far as you can their general prosperity. See that your workshops are light and well-ventilated. As far as you have the means, give your people the advantage of living where there is plenty of space. This was our main object in removing from Birmingham into the

> country. It was morally right and proved financially to be a success, because the business had room to expand (quoted in Gardiner, 1923, p. 120).

This notion of giving gave considerable pleasure to George Cadbury, and it seems to have been imbued by other family members. To this day there remain charitable trusts in the names of The Cadbury Foundation, as well as Edward, George's son, and William and Barrow Cadbury, George's nephews.

Whilst Bournville was essentially a for-profit business, it was also a social experiment. For Cadbury, business success was consistent with the well-being and welfare of the workforce, as well as the corollary of it. The rapidly expanding Bournville plant was not simply a crucible of business innovation, it was also an experiment in social ideas. The schemes of worker involvement and participation form an important part of Williams's book (1931), alongside welfare in the workplace, which evolved and expanded once the younger members of the family took more of a central role in the running of the company. From 1899 George Cadbury chaired the company, but increasingly devoted his time to his more philanthropic activities outside the company, leaving the day-to-day running of the company to William, Barrow, Edward and George Junior. Whilst Edward was the creative heart of workforce experiment and innovation, it remained a collective effort, driven by their family Quaker beliefs. They had all been shocked by the degradation and privations suffered by many factory workers in Birmingham. The hours were long, wages low, dismissals callous and frequent, and health invariably suffered. This troubled the Cadbury family, which, as committed Quakers, had strong notions of faith and morality. Whilst there was always a high level of tolerance towards differing opinions in the workplace, the family remained rigorous and firm in their approach towards behaviour and conduct (Note 4). Sound economics and business success remained the backdrop to the ideas and experiments introduced at Bournville.

As part of my argument is to contest the idea that Cadbury was a narrow social control paternalist, now would be an appropriate time to provide a review of some of the literature on paternalism. Fitzgerald has considered British labour management in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, giving full attention to the importance and influence of 'welfare' (Fitzgerald, 1988). However, in an otherwise interesting examination of industrial welfare, he gives little detailed attention to what he might mean by paternalism. Drawing upon Joyce (Joyce, 1980), he noted the close relationship between industry, society, culture and politics in areas like the Lancashire cotton industry, but this example does not readily transfer to Bournville and Cadbury. For example, the Cadbury family identified with the world of Liberal politics, but did not appear to use their personal affiliations to influence their workers. Indeed, there was a branch of the Communist Party operating on the Bournville site in the 1920s and 1930s, which would not seem to suggest the family and company exerted undue sway on the Bournville workers or the Bournville

community (Bailey, 2002). However, early on in his work, Fitzgerald does make an interesting interpretation:

> The employment relationship ..... produced class conflict as well as deference, but the success of factory production depended upon an unwritten agreement of cooperation between employers and workers. Yet, whatever its cultural or social perspectives, paternalism in practical and material terms dealt with the provision of housing, social amenities, old age pensions and sick pay (Fitzgerald, 1988, p. 10).

Fitzgerald made two important observations here. He reminded us of the importance of class conflict, something that was often referred to in Britain immediately before and after the First World War. This was precisely the time Edward Cadbury was introducing his management system at Bournville, and the period he was most active in recording his 'experiments'. Whilst Birmingham during this period was not immune from industrial and political ferment, it was not noted as an area that suffered much from class action and solidarity. So, it would be difficult to provide evidence to suggest Edward Cadbury's experiments and insights were driven in any way by class tensions of the time. Secondly, Fitzgerald identified what paternalism meant in practical and material terms. Unfortunately, he did not go much beyond this description, although he does conclude paternalism was unsuited to large companies and professionalised management - a conclusion that does not sit very easily with the Cadbury experience. The company continued to grow in size throughout the twentieth century, but still maintained its general approach and ethos until at least the 1960s.

Another, and more sustained, attempt at defining paternalism is provided by Melling (1983). Even so, he does not fully differentiate the terms 'paternalism' and 'industrial welfare', using them interchangeably. For him, industrial welfare is simply a non-wage benefit, but that there are three ways of approaching welfare provision. First, there is the empirical, which he defines as "welfare in terms of the range and content of amenities." Second, there is the purposive, which are analytical attempts to identify the motives for provision. Third, there is the functional, which outlines the objective functions which welfare seems to satisfy. Whilst this is an improvement on the Fitzgerald text, providing something of a framework which could be used to evaluate levels and depth of industrial welfare, it remains inadequate. This approach is more of a working model than a useful tool. Its major failing is that that it does not define paternalism or industrial welfare with any degree of precision. To be fair, Melling himself admits this weakness, acknowledging the approach is only useful when located in the wider context of industrial relations.

E P Thompson also addresses paternalism in his essay, 'Patricians and Plebs' (Thompson, 1991). Over several pages, he draws upon a wide range of evidence to support his general theme of the relationship between 'the gentry' and 'the labouring poor'. The evidence stacks up in impressive fashion, at one moment drawing on the insights of Karl Marx and Max Weber, at another referring to colonial Brazil, ancient Rome and pre-

independence Virginia. Unfortunately, despite the display of erudition, Thompson had to conclude paternalism remained an imprecise term. In this sense he saw it as no better or worse than a range of other terms, like 'feudal', 'capitalist' or 'bourgeois'. Despite this, Thompson still provides a range of perceptive observations that are worthwhile noting:

> .....paternalism is a loose descriptive term. It has considerable less historical specificity than such terms as feudalism or capitalism; it tends to offer a model of the social order as it is seen from above; it has implications of warmth and of face-to-face relations which imply notions of value; it confuses the actual and the ideal. This does not mean that the term should be discharged as utterly unfit for service. It has as much and as little value as other generalized terms – authoritarian, democratic, egalitarian – which cannot in themselves, and without substantial additions, be brought to characterize a system of social relations. No thoughtful historian should characterize a whole society as paternalist or patriarchal (Thompson, 1991, p. 24).

We should, of course, remember that Thompson was mainly addressing his remarks to late eighteenth and early nineteenth century England. Whilst this does not invalidate his comments, it needs to be remembered that Cadbury was working and writing a full century later. This necessarily circumscribes some of Thompson's analysis, and leaves it less useful for our purposes.

The historian Feinberg, has identified two forms of paternalism that make similar points to the dictionary definition provided earlier on page 1 (Feinberg, 1991, pp.105-124). Feinberg differentiates between strong and weak forms of paternalism. The stronger version suggests a generally authoritarian and top-down approach by management, whereas the weaker form of paternalism could be associated with Cadbury. This would be represented by the levels of welfare provided by the firm, as for instance health care, health and safety provision and pension and sickness arrangements. It was particularly distinguished by the levels of consultation and democracy evident in the workplace. Works committees and works councils were both products of Edward Cadbury's time. To describe them now is to describe something that appears unexceptional by today's standards, but at the time they were innovatory and radical. There were two suggestions schemes too: one for men and one for women. In 1914 something like 8000 suggestions were received, of which approximately one in four were adopted and used. Whilst suggestions were, for the most part, improvements in the factory and on the job, others were more employee-oriented, including the ventilation of grievances. Prizes were awarded for suggestions adopted, and the committees themselves consisted largely of employees elected by ballot.

The success of the Cadbury company was, at least in part, due to the capacity to work hard characterised by all members of the Cadbury family. Self-denial in the early days was also important (Note 5). George Cadbury refused to float the company on the stock exchange, despite the attractions of increased wealth, fearing that the company might fall under the influence of those whose only purpose was profit. Cadbury saw the company as a social experiment, so the workers were viewed as partners, rather than merely hired hands.

This seems to have been a view shared by most employees, as can be witnessed in the glowing tributes afforded the family over many years (Note 6). As strong Christians, the Cadburys believed that all life was sacrosanct, and therefore valuable. So, in so far as they could, they set about making the lives of their workers comfortable. They always paid above the industry rate, and introduced a range of benefits that reduced profits: medical facilities, pension arrangements, educational provision, convalescent homes and sports and social club facilities. Trade union membership was encouraged, and they were particularly proud of the Social Service league, the group of female Cadbury workers already mentioned, who supported a paid organiser (Julia Varley) to encourage trade union membership amongst women workers in Birmingham factories (Gardiner, 1923, p. 113).

Despite these measures, the family never relinquished ownership of the company in this period. They were prepared to share a measure of decision-making and control through the various shop committees and works councils, but still made final decisions in matters of investment and strategy. They obviously felt they were in the best position to make these decisions, but nevertheless retained an openness to change and innovation. Maybe this is the reason Gardiner made this interesting observation on participation and industrial democracy:

> Socialists themselves will probably admit that there are stages in industrial evolution when more is to be gained by the personal initiative of one or two far-sighted capitalists than would be gained by a policy which must be submitted at every step to popular approval (Gardiner, 1923, p. 115).

But despite this legacy of good works, there is a period in Cadbury history that has left something of a stain on its record (Note 7). In 1901 rumours reached the company that the supplies of cocoa they received from the Portuguese West African islands of Sao Tome and Principe, were worked by slave labour. The supplies were substantial, as they amounted to 55% of the company's UK consumption. This was obviously very serious, and was perhaps accentuated by the known historical contribution Quakers had made to end the slave trade in Britain and around the world. William Cadbury was given specific responsibility for discovering the truth about the allegations, and was faced with something of a dilemma. If the company acted with speed and stopped sourcing the supplies from the Portuguese colonies, it was possible the allegations were untrue, and this would result in unnecessary unemployment and suffering. Equally, sourcing the equivalent amount of cocoa from elsewhere at short notice was impossible, and this would result in Bournville workers being laid off. This presented the company with a problem, but something had to be done.

William was given ample funds by the Board to discover the facts. He travelled to Lisbon in 1903 to meet Sao Tome planters and the British Ambassador, but failed to secure the necessary evidence. In order to investigate further, Cadbury reached an agreement to co-operate with three other cocoa manufacturers (two Quaker, Fry and Rowntree, as well as the German company, Stollwerck). The English Quaker, Joseph Burtt, was asked to

investigate in 1904, and spent over £3000 doing so. But it was a long, drawn-out investigation. First, he spent 10 months in Lisbon learning Portuguese so as to understand the full implications of what he might encounter. Second, he visited Sao Tome 1905-6, and in 1906 he also visited Angola, where it was suspected the slaves originated. Although he concluded that the contract labour amounted to slave labour, his report wasn't ready until 1907. There also remained a problem. Missionaries in Angola refused to confirm that trafficking in slaves existed, and therefore there remained no indisputable evidence. The British government had also been unhelpful. Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, had insisted on doing everything diplomatically before supporting the idea of a boycott of Sao Tome cocoa. This resulted in further delay and, possibly, procrastination – a charge that was levelled at the company.

Matters were brought to a head in September 1908 when the *Evening Standard* published a story that Cadbury was guilty of profiting from the slave trade. The *Standard* was a Conservative newspaper, and strongly opposed to the Liberal supporting Cadbury family. The family felt they had no alternative but to defend themselves against what they considered to be a libellous charge, despite the absence of conclusive evidence of slave trafficking. The company had been reducing its reliance on Sao Tome cocoa since 1903, and also, no doubt spurred on by the *Standard* allegation, asked the missionary Charles Swan to seek evidence in Angola in October 1908. He reported his evidence to the Foreign Office in June 1909, and published a book in August 1909 (Swan, 1909). A letter in *The Times* in June 1909 carried a further letter from 19 missionaries condemning Portuguese contract labour as slavery. This appeared to be just in time. The libel case was heard in December 1909, and the jury returned their verdict in less than an hour, finding for Cadbury. But there was a sting in the tail. Damages awarded were a farthing, a derisory amount.

What conclusions can be reached about this case? Satre (2005) provides a detailed and critical review of the allegation, but the chapter in Williams (1931) is fair and balanced, and provides a good overview of the libel case. The jury reached their decision very quickly, suggesting they were not in any doubt about who should win. They also made the *Standard* pay all costs, which were very substantial. But the derisory award suggests the court was not wholly convinced by the Cadbury case. It may well have thought that the firm should have acted more quickly, despite the lack of conclusive evidence. Certainly, a gap of eight years between the first suspicions of slavery in 1901 and its confirmation in 1909 encourage the view that the firm may have dragged its feet. Even so, in its defence, the firm could point to the non-co-operation of the Portuguese planters and authorities, the delays imposed by British government diplomacy, and the unwillingness of missionaries to offer support. But did the company only initiate the efforts of Charles Swan to gain conclusive evidence of slavery *after* being prompted by the *Standard* allegation? Possibly, but the firm had started plantations in the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1908 as an alternative source of cocoa, and they had been reducing their reliance on Sao Tome cocoa from 1903. It is obviously difficult to reach a firm conclusion, but the jury's decision was perhaps near the mark. The

allegation was libellous, but perhaps withdrawal should have taken place earlier to avoid the accusation of procrastination. Following the decision, the Cadbury company permanently boycotted Sao Tome, and donated all the profits made between 1902 and 1908 to good causes.

The company produced its own glossy history of the company in 1931, designed to publicise the centenary of the company (Rogers, 1931). It provides a range of interesting information and material lacking elsewhere, but does not add much of substance to what is available in the Williams (1931) history. It was written by T B Rogers, who was the editor of the *Bournville Works Magazine* at the time, and makes excellent use of diagrams, illustrations and photographs of the company and its workforce, all available in the company archive. It also clarifies why the company celebrated its centenary in 1931, as already explained at the beginning of Section One. Another interesting piece is the chapter on 'Bridge Street Days'. As the company expanded, it needed bigger premises than the warehouse in Crooked Lane, and moved to new and bigger premises in Bridge Street. The Bridge Street days were important in that these were the days immediately prior to the move to Bournville in 1879, and provided the setting for the brothers to develop the early foundations of their approach to good employee relations (Rogers, 1931, p. 27). The kind of working environment that was gradually being developed by the Cadburys can be gleaned from the following memory of the employee, F Restall:

> My recollections of Bridge Street are very pleasant. The work was easy, the hours comfortable, wages good and holidays plentiful – a marked contrast to my previous experience which had been mainly long hours, very little holidays and poor wages. During the thirty two years that the firm occupied the Bridge Street works, conditions no doubt varied considerably at different times. These were firm but fair, and there were no disputes. For example, the hours of work were not always the same; when the brothers took over the firm, the hours were from 08.00 to 19.30, six days a week. Gradually the number of hours lessened, and in summer 1865, were from 06.00 to 14.30, with coffee provided for breakfast and twenty minutes for lunch (quoted in Carrington, 2011, p. 27).

This early memoir seems to suggest that the beginnings of a humane labour relations strategy were already in evidence even before Bournville days.

Quakers in Commerce by Paul H Emden is a book that receives little attention, but a book that contains plenty of interesting information otherwise neglected by other writers on Cadbury (Emden, 1939). The foreword is written by Sir Montague Burton, founder of the retail outlet that still bears his name. What is less well known is that Burton was an enthusiast for promoting good working relationships in the workplace. As part of his support, he set up and sponsored three Chairs in Industrial Relations at British Universities: Cambridge, Cardiff and Leeds (Lyddon, 2003). These Chairs continue today, and remain a fitting tribute to his vision. His foreword is an early tribute to Quaker commercial success, but also a recognition of the values on which much of their success was built:

> The Quakers are different from any other sect, creed or religion. They seldom preach the Commandments, are rarely seen in the pulpit; they are content to practise their tenets, quietly and conscientiously....There is an absence of arrogance and ostentation in days of success and achievement, and of despondency in days of set-back and failure. Humility, modesty and simplicity seem to be their natural heritage (Emden, 1939, p. vii).

and

> They have shown, not only that business is compatible with integrity, *but that it cannot be lastingly successful without* (Emden, 1939, p. v)

Emden was not a Quaker, and provides something of an impartial viewpoint. His section on Cadbury is relatively brief, but does make the point that Cadbury never saw business as a charity. Equally, he notes they advocated the labour and trade union movements, not least because George Cadbury noted "our workers spend the greater part of their lives at their work and we wish to make it less irksome by environing them with pleasant and wholesome sights, sounds and conditions." This seems to have been borne out by comparing death and infant mortality death rates in Birmingham and Bournville.

Death rate	**1915-1919**	**Infant mortality**
14.9	England and Wales	97
13.7	Birmingham	101
7.7	Bournville	51

But Emden is also prepared to note the inconsistencies in Cadbury Quaker behaviour. For example, despite Quaker support for pacifism during the First World War, Egbert, one of George Cadbury's sons, joined the armed forces, became a Major, and shot down two Zeppelins on his way to being awarded the D.S.C. and D.F.C! But the general overview and final comment on Cadbury remained positive. It would appear that during the First World War, George Cadbury sent the poorest children in Vienna three tons of chocolate to share, so much so that he later became known in Vienna circles as Der Shokoladen Onkel.

David Burns Windsor is a Quaker, and provides something of a routine run-down of a range of Quaker businesses, including the banking firm of Lloyds, the biscuit firm of Huntley and Palmers, Abraham Darby and his family of Coalbrookdale ironmasters, as well as the chocolate manufacturers, Cadbury and Rowntree (Windsor, 1980). Alongside the section on the chocolate factory, Windsor spends an almost equal amount of time delineating the Cadbury ownership of the *Daily News*. In particular, he highlighted its campaigns against the Boer War, the sweated trades, the campaign in favour of smallholdings, and its help in raising £30,000 for the Bethesda slate quarry strike fund in 1903. But being a newspaper owner was not without its problems. Cadbury also bought the *Morning Leader* and *Star* newspapers to prevent them falling into the hands of Conservative owners. Unfortunately, as with many newspapers of the time, both published betting and racing news. As gambling was an activity Quakers were supposed to be wholly against, this resulted in accusations of

hypocrisy from Conservative organs like the *Spectator*, as well as criticism from within Quaker circles (Cadbury, 2009, pp. 219-20). To help avoid these kinds of criticisms, the family set up The Daily News Trust in 1911, which invoked the ethical teaching of Jesus Christ, particularly the Sermon on the Mount, to apply Quaker beliefs and Christian thinking to the worlds of journalism and publishing (Cadbury, 2009, p. 221).

As can be seen from this brief review of the literature on Cadbury, it is generally complimentary, with the main exception being the references to the slave trade in the Portuguese colony of Sao Tome. The comments on the workings of the Bournville plant are generally hailed as being forward thinking and benign, receiving warm praise throughout. However, there is one main exception, and that is the academic and critic, Michael Rowlinson (Rowlinson, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2002). Although it is some years since he last wrote a piece on Cadbury, over a period of about 12 or 13 years he published a number of highly critical pieces on the company and its working practices. These represent an important critique but, as yet, have not been subject to detailed scrutiny. We now turn to the substance of the Rowlinson critique.

Rowlinson's critique: Quakerism as epiphenomena and invented history

For the purposes of this thesis, I will concentrate on Rowlinson's four published papers. These would seem to best represent the mature views of Rowlinson on Cadbury. For three of the papers, Rowlinson is the sole author. A fourth paper is co-authored with John Hassard, and may represent a more moderated viewpoint. Even so, this fourth paper is something of a case study on the Cadbury company, and is therefore likely to be predominantly the work of Rowlinson. There is a book, co-authored with John Child and Chris Smith, but this suggests a more collaborative effort, and might not fully represent Rowlinson's views. For this reason, I've chosen to leave it, along with his unpublished PhD, in the hope that in the four published papers I am addressing those views that best represent Rowlinson's critique. Furthermore, I will restrict my comments to the salient issues raised by Rowlinson in his four papers. At this stage I will focus on the first paper, leaving the other three papers to be addressed at later, more appropriate places, in the thesis.

The constant theme in Rowlinson's work is contesting the idea that the Cadbury company, and in particular its labour policies, were the direct result of the family's Quakerism. In each of the four papers he draws attention, usually early on, to his concern that the Quakerism is simply a gloss, and of little importance to the real story. So, in his first paper on the use of scientific management in the company, his opening statement begins:

> The history of Cadbury has usually been considered as an example of industrial paternalism, or enlightened entrepreneurs, and this is associated with the Cadbury family's Quakerism. This has directed attention away from a clear analysis of organisational developments, especially in relation to labour.
> (Rowlinson, 1988, p. 377).

Rowlinson makes an important point here. He is suggesting the Quaker references have diverted attention away from recognising that forms of scientific management were being applied in the company early in the twentieth century. Scientific management as a technique has a particularly bad reputation among labour scholars and trade unionists, so any suggestion that the company was using the production system designed by F W Taylor (Taylor, 1911) was bound to dent the image of Cadbury as a good employer. Whilst Rowlinson is quite right to draw attention to this oversight in the work of other commentators on Cadbury, a closer examination of Rowlinson's case suggests his argument is less than compelling.

He begins by noting the company's interest in improving 'efficiency' in the workplace, and draws attention to the developing policy on 'slow' women workers.

> It may seem obvious, but it needs to be stated that, if by paying better wages Cadbury was able to secure better, more efficient workers, this could only be done by instituting a sophisticated selection procedure with criteria for efficiency being laid down.' (Rowlinson, 1988, p. 380)

But it is difficult to see why Rowlinson found this a particular concern. Should the company be condemned for merely wanting to recruit and train employees to be efficient? Edwards and Ramirez (2016) make just such a point in a recent paper about new technology, where workers have an interest in the efficiency and success of the enterprise on which their own jobs and livelihoods depend. Surely, what *is* more important is how that efficiency is achieved and what impact it might have on the workers? Efficiency is a key policy in all organisations, and Cadbury would be no exception. Indeed, efficiency and the reduction in wasted time, effort and resources would be a good example of a Quaker testimony in practice, i.e. that of sustainability. Nor did the company try to hide this objective. Here is Cadbury in his book *Experiments in Industrial Organization*

> To accomplish this purpose [efficiency] the directors found it necessary to adopt a careful method of selecting their employees, a scheme for educating them, carefully thought-out methods for promotion, just and fair discipline, and opportunities for the development of the organizing ability and initiative of the workers. The direct value for business efficiency of the various schemes described is indicated by the continuous growth of the business and the number of people employed. (Cadbury, 1912, p. xviii)

Cadbury went on to explain that the company had grown from 303 workers in 1880 to 6,182 in 1911, confirming the success of the approach. The more important question here, is how these efficiencies were introduced. On this, Rowlinson acknowledges that although dismissals took place in the company, introducing appropriate remedial methods usually put matters right. Indeed, as Rowlinson further acknowledges, poor health rather than

indolence or laziness was the main cause of the young women not earning the minimum rates set (Rowlinson, 1988, p. 378).

In 1913 a symposium on scientific management had been conducted through the pages of the *Sociological Review*. F W Taylor and Edward Cadbury had debated at the symposium, and Rowlinson refers to this in his paper. He suggests Cadbury embraced scientific management, but with two main caveats: first he opposed the notion of the 'task idea', Taylor's view that the worker should be restricted to limited and intensive tasks, making the worker something of a robot. Second, Cadbury opposed Taylor's aversion to trade unions, Rowlinson acknowledging Cadbury "had a positive attitude towards trade unions" (Rowlinson, 1988, p. 384). In fairness to Edward Cadbury, this is something of an understatement, as examples provided throughout this thesis attest. But, in providing an example now, the company 'powers and functions' handbook of the Shop Committees and Works Council had as its opening statement:

> 'The first duty of a Shop Committee shall be to encourage and establish good relations between workers and management.'

And then followed it by affirming:

> 'Important Notice The Directors and Drafting Committee are agreed that there is an advantage to both sides in negotiating with organized labour, and that therefore, membership of a Trades Union is desirable.' (*Handbook*, 1919, pp. ii-iii)

This strong support encouraging trade union membership by the Board of Directors would have been very unusual in a private company. Such support for trade union membership effectively undermines any suggestion that Cadbury was a company taking advantage of the newly emerging scientific management practices to 'sweat' their workers. Although Rowlinson raised some important and relevant issues in this first paper, he fails to acknowledge the full Cadbury case for change, and for the most part he overstates his case.

The other three Rowlinson papers go on to make a number of key charges against Cadbury. First, he suggests the Quaker conscience had little influence on the introduction of the various welfare schemes early in the twentieth century, instead suggesting these were simply copies of ideas already being used by some contemporary American employers or 'welfare capitalists'. Second, that the Quaker conscience was a form of historiography or post-hoc rationalisation, a kind of invented history, rather than being genuinely sincere or central to what they did in the firm. Third, he questions the idealised image of the company presented by Cadbury World, instead considering the use of Quakerism in terms of the potential conflict between corporate heritage and the representation of history, especially in relation to the management of labour. These three papers, and the substance of their critique, will be returned to later at more appropriate points throughout the thesis. Now there is a need to examine how far Quakerism was relevant to the Cadbury experiment. If

we are to assess the importance of that Quakerism, and Edward Cadbury's personal contribution as a Quaker, we first need to understand the wider context of Birmingham Quakerism at this time.

b) Birmingham Quakerism in the early twentieth century

In the extant literature on Cadbury, there is far too little attention given to Quakerism as the defining faith and practice of the Cadbury family, and how it influenced the way in which they grew and developed their business. The central character in this thesis is Edward Cadbury, and there is a need to explain both Quakerism as a religious faith within the Christian tradition, and the ways in which it influenced Edward Cadbury's business approach. Throwing more light on Quakerism and how it might have influenced Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury family during the early twentieth century is important, as is an overview of what was happening in and among Quakers in Birmingham and the West Midlands. This helps provide context, and there is a particularly helpful guide to be found in the *Handbook for Yearly Meeting, 1908*, that was produced for the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) that year. Included in the *Handbook* is a wide range of information on Quakerism and its development in the Midlands from its beginnings in the 1640s, but particular emphasis is placed on recent developments in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This included offshoots of Quaker activity and influence in the worlds of Adult Schools, social work and local government activity, as well as plenty of references to the wider world of education.

Before touching on some of these activities, it is important to say something about Quakerism as it appeared in Birmingham and the wider Midlands during this period. After the beginnings and consolidation of Quakerism in the period 1647 to the late seventeenth century, the Quietist period began. The Quietist period was a time of withdrawal from worldly affairs, and Quakers became an insular and somewhat narrow sect. This was most obviously observed in the plain dress that Quakers wore as something of a uniform, with a firm rejection of vanity and ostentation. Even so, it was a period in which Quakers upheld strong Christian principles and beliefs, and enforced this discipline throughout the Society. This was a period in which high ethical standards and strict integrity were maintained, and they, in turn, generated high levels of trust. Unsurprisingly, the wider population were keen to have business dealings with such people, and it was during this period that a range of Quaker businesses began to prosper. This period in Quaker history (c1690 – 1840) remained quite late on in Birmingham. Even up until the middle of the nineteenth century, the modes and mores of this period still held sway.

> Friends were generally distinguished by a sterling integrity and strength of character which will always constitute a goal of attainment.....and there were amongst them conspicuous instances of philanthropic zeal. But the Society was rigidly secluded within itself.... (*Handbook....*1908, p. 63).

It was also at this time that Quakerism appeared to be dying. A once vibrant and vigorous community was now reduced to declining congregations and closed Meeting Houses.

This led into the next phase in Quaker development, the evangelical revival, which only covered a period of about 50 years (c1840 – 1890). Even so, it was to provide a particularly important stimulus to an otherwise moribund community. Birmingham and its satellite Meetings had about 430 of the then 505 members of Warwickshire Monthly Meeting. Of the four Meetings beyond Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Stourbridge and Warwick, they were all in a state of decay, and were almost certainly expected to eventually close (*Handbook....*1908, p. 65).It would appear that the single most important activity that was to revive Birmingham and its surrounding Meetings was the introduction and promotion of the Adult Schools (*Handbook....*1908, p. 67). The Quaker, Joseph Sturge, had been a founder of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and was also a Chartist supporter and candidate in three parliamentary elections, 1842, 1844 and 1847. However, his particular contribution in Birmingham was the founding of the Adult School in 1845. Adult Schools were not new; the first had been opened in Nottingham as early as 1798. But it was Sturge who initiated Birmingham Adult School, and the School was to grow and expand into a large scale enterprise, involving many thousands of 'students' over the years (Kelly, 1970, p. 154).

The idea behind the schools was to provide instruction in reading, writing and scripture for the working classes, whose exposure to education was limited. Sturge encouraged young Quakers to get involved teaching and assisting, and many did. Later in the century, Edward Cadbury was to be one such Quaker. These schools led to small Meetings taking place in the homes of individuals, some of these being prayer meetings, and eventually these were followed by a Sunday Evening Meeting of Young Quakers reading the Bible (Rowntree and Binns, 1903, pp. 12-17). These developments led to increased membership, and something of a resurgence of Quakerism in Birmingham and the local areas. This was followed in 1882 with a series of evangelistic meetings in Birmingham and the surrounding areas, which led to even more adult schools and mission work. The final significant factor in spreading Quakerism beyond the city was when Cadbury moved their works to Bournville. As the Cadbury's were well-known Quakers, and held a regular Meeting for Worship in a room at the factory, the influence of Quakerism widened. Eventually, this initial Meeting in the south of the city led to further Meetings for Worship in the immediate area. This extension in Quakerism helped consolidate and expand Quaker influence in Birmingham and the local area, which, quite possibly, led to its survival.

But, as with all passing phases, this period, important as it was, gave way to the phase of Quakerism that was to be the predominant influence on Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury family as they grew and developed the family firm. Most of the relevant literature dates this period to 1895, which was the date when the Manchester Conference was convened. This Conference was the single event that seems to have stamped its authority

on the world of British Quakerism, and shifted its members from their evangelical 'turn', to one that returned the faith to the more mystical side of its belief and practice, but also more in tune with modernist theological thought. This was to result in an approach to practice that was sufficiently strong to produce a range of Quaker employers that were so compact and cohesive as a body that they held conferences of Quaker employers every ten years to share common principles, practices and thinking (Note 8). Following the Manchester Conference, which introduced newer thought in the fields of religion, revelation and the vitality of the Quaker faith, in 1897 a Summer School was organised in Scarborough. This acted to solidify the trends taking place in the Religious Society, and when a further Summer School was convened in Birmingham two years later, the direction of travel was firmly embedded in the Society (Dandelion, 2007, p. 119).

Whilst my focus here is on the Quakerism of the time, and, in particular, Quakerism as it was in Birmingham, some mention must also be made of the influence of the wider religious environment. Quakers were within the Nonconformist tradition, and what was happening within the Nonconformist tradition at the time is, therefore, of some importance. It was about 1890 that the phrase, 'The Nonconformist Conscience', first acquired common usage. Bebbington (1982) uses it as the attitude the Nonconformist churches adopted towards a range of public issues of the time, e.g. social problems (like those of the factory system), religious equality, imperialism, education and the Irish Question. It is noteworthy that there were two strands of Nonconformism: the 'old' Dissenter tradition dating back to the seventeenth century, which included Baptists, Congregationalists, Quakers and Unitarians. These tended to emphasise religious freedom, social justice and opposition to discrimination and compulsion. The 'new' Dissenters were mainly Methodists, but would also include the Salvation Army. These tended to emphasise family values, sexual morality and temperance. Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury family would have clearly sat within the 'old' tradition, in that they were Quakers and enthusiastic about religious freedom, social justice and opposition to discrimination, and tried to ensure these prevailed in the workplace. They would not have ventured to tell others how to live their lives, and therefore would not have deliberately imposed their values on their workers. However, they did live by a strict moral code themselves, and inevitably some of those values would impose on their workers, e.g. when a female worker married, she would be dismissed from the firm (usually with a gift). This was because they felt the rightful role for a married woman was as wife and mother, and she should not be distracted by the demands of the workplace. It was *not* because the company felt the employee would be less committed to her work. Indeed, the company lost a good number of very experienced staff by maintaining this policy.

Quakers embraced a range of the influences of the Nonconformist Conscience, and on many social issues, like improved housing and the labour question, they were probably leading the Nonconformist community. Certainly, other employers like Lever and Salt, both Congregationalists, had made the workplace and its environment a much better place to

work for their employees, but there were also shortcomings. Theirs was a form of paternalism based on making employees more dependent on the employer, rather than encouraging and supporting a sense of independence, as at the Quaker Cadburys. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were the period when the Nonconformist tradition and its 'conscience' were at their peak, and it was in this period that Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury family appeared to be most 'political' in their activities. Housing, welfare reform, old age pensions and labour relations all had a political edge to them during this period, and the Cadbury family played a part in promoting all of them. Bebbington concludes his book with the view that by 1910 the period of the 'Nonconformist Conscience' had come to the end. This is an interesting point to make, but an earlier author on the subject disagrees. Stephen Koss (1975) suggests it goes on later into the twentieth century, supporting his view by providing numbers for Nonconformist candidates and MP's up until 1935. Edward Cadbury seemed to fit somewhere in between these two dates, in that he was still producing written work after 1910, and was involved in the Quaker Employers Conferences into the 1930s. The influence of the Nonconformist conscience in political matters was important, but probably not as effective as it would have liked. Even so, it left something of a legacy, and the issues raised – religious equality, the Irish question, housing, labour relations – all remain important political issues today.

All of this is important and influential in its impact on Quakers in Britain generally, but what about specific developments in Birmingham? Quakers in Birmingham and the surrounding area responded with enthusiasm and support, and there are particular reasons why that was the case. William Littleboy and John Hoyland made the point that Birmingham Friends had never been greatly interested in theology for its own sake:

> Living in a great commercial community, actively engaged in business, in touch with the City's civil life, with which many of them have been associated, they have as a rule learned to regard religion from the point of view of action and character rather than of doctrine (*Handbook*....1908, p. 78).

This could have some disadvantages in that it seems to give less importance to faith. But it does reinforce the Quaker reluctance to live by a particular catechism or creed, instead, preferring to live by an open-minded attitude which concentrates more on the leadings of God, and its impact on conduct and behaviour, rather than a set of rigid beliefs that might come across as harsh and intolerant. Littleboy and Hoyland cite as an example of this more practical approach, the already mentioned, William White, a revered Friend who effectively continued and widened the work of Birmingham Adult Schools, first promoted by Joseph Sturge (Rowntree and Binns, 1903 pp. 18-20). A further, and accompanying reason for this more pragmatic and business-like approach to Quakerism, was the philanthropic and religious work of the Society. Rather than worry or concern themselves much with the form of the message, most Birmingham Quakers, including the Cadbury's, became much more engrossed in the endeavour itself. It mattered little to most Birmingham Quakers whether they differed from a colleague or colleagues on the interpretations of scripture or

the theory of salvation. More effort was given to the task and its completion, rather than the process involved in completing the task.

A final factor that seemed to help this smooth transition to a more experiential form of faith was the grace with which those Friends of a more evangelical mind displayed in a spirit of love and understanding towards those of the new generation that were taking the Society in a direction they found unsettling. This helped maintain a firm unity within the Society which ensured the transition from evangelical to Modernist was peaceful and harmonious. John Punshon has written on this, citing George Cadbury as an example of an influential figure in the Society that helped bring about this transition:

> George Cadbury's influence on London Yearly Meeting extends far beyond his own particular concerns, for he was one of a circle of forward-looking Friends who sensed, in the years around 1900, that the Society would be unable to live much longer on past glories. So, together out of common interest rather than concerted design, they began a movement for renewal which provided the Society with the intellectual and spiritual direction which it needed and at the same time appeared to lack. The movement emerged at the Manchester Conference of 1895, consolidated with the foundation of the Woodbrooke Settlement in 1902, and came to fruition with the setting up of the Friends' Ambulance Unit in 1914 (Punshon, 2006, p. 208).

It is perhaps important to note that this practical turn of faith was displayed much more widely than merely within the Society of Friends. Quakers had long been participants in civic and local Birmingham affairs, but this phase of Quakerism seemed to energise Birmingham Quakers into doing more than previously. A brief overview of some of these activities is perhaps worthwhile at this juncture. Mention has already been made of the Adult School movement in the area, begun by Joseph Sturge but even more energetically promoted by William White (White, 1895). The first school was opened in October 1845, and the settled time for classes was 7.30am on Sunday mornings. Teaching the bible was always the mainstay of the classes in the early years, but reading and writing were taught too. Other subjects were to follow. William White became involved in 1848, and taught his class for the next 52 years until his death. By 1905 the numbers had grown to 3,585 students in 37 Morning Schools. It has been noted that over the years the public life of Birmingham benefitted greatly from the Adult School movement. Many men went on to civic positions of various kinds after having started in a local Adult School, not least a number of Mayors and Lord Mayors (Briggs, 1952).

The Cadbury contribution to the Adult Schools in Birmingham was considerable. At the age of 22, Edward Cadbury, the main subject of this thesis, taught Class XIV of the Bristol Street division, as did his father, George Senior. George Senior's brother, Richard, was teaching Class XV at the Moseley Road Division, as was his son Barrow. There was a good spread of women family members too: Emma Cadbury (Class 4), Hannah Cadbury (Class 7), Sarah Cadbury (Class 16) and Elizabeth Cadbury (an occasional teacher), all at the Priory

School in Birmingham city centre (White, 1895, pp. 120-1). Class XIV, Edward's class, is described thus:

> The members of the original town section have maintained their position, and a vigorous spiritual life, by constant effort to bring the blessings they themselves have received within the reach of others. The number on the books in the central class in Bristol Street is from 400 to 450, and about 560 in the branches mentioned [Bearwood, Northfield and Selly Oak], making a total of nearly 1,000 members bound together more or less by monthly intervisitation (White, 1895, p. 50).

The spiritual dimension to the classes is clearly visible, but the large numbers attending suggest a real desire among Birmingham men and women to grow and develop themselves, and make use of their particular abilities. But what is perhaps even more interesting is the range of additional activities that developed out of this and other classes:

> Among the institutions of class XIV [Edward's class] is a fishing club which rents its water, and to which members of other classes have since been invited. It was the first out of fifty clubs existing in Birmingham which had not its head-quarters in a public house. They have also a successful bicycling club, cricket club, football club, and a small loan society from which money is lent out at small interest to some who may be starting in some small way of business. A mutual aid society, which has £150 in hand, is also in existence, and by a payment of a halfpenny per week the widow of a member is entitled at his death to £5. Savings clubs, too, have existed for many years in Class XIV, from which £800 to £900 are paid out at the end of each year. Meetings for the wives of members are well attended on week-days, at Bristol Street, Selly Oak, and Northfield, with an attendance of almost 300 per week. They are termed social afternoons for women, and connected with them are sick clubs, savings clubs, blanket clubs, and other institutions which are connected with the men's classes. (White, 1895, p. 50).

The importance of this information should not be underestimated. As already noted, commentators have tended to describe the Cadbury company as paternalistic, in the sense that such welfare practices were simply a ploy or ruse that was used by the business to ingratiate the employees into support for the company as a benevolent company to work for. Many of the above activities: sports clubs, savings clubs, mutual aid societies and sick clubs, all featured at Bournville, but not as an arm of the company to keep the workers subdued, but rather as an outgrowth of their Quaker beliefs and practices. The very fact that they had already been tried and tested as valuable additions to their Adult Class teaching in the late nineteenth century would have encouraged the Cadburys to introduce and encourage such activities at Bournville too. This was not paternalism, but simply an aspect of Quaker behaviour in practice.

Although my earlier comments have been about Men's Adult Schools, as was the custom of the time, there were separate Men's and Women's Adult Schools. The Women's Schools, whilst smaller in number, were important in their own right. Bible study remained

the staple diet, but reading and writing were important too, although as with the Men's Adult Schools, these became less important after 1870, when universal schooling became more comprehensive, and the need for basic literacy skills less needed. The level of teacher commitment to these Schools was enormous. Frances Ashford, who began teaching her first class in January, 1848, was still teaching the class some 60 years later. That same year there were a total of 40 Schools, with more being opened each year. It is notable that these schools were not solely a means of education. The Priory School, connected with Bull Street Meeting in the centre of Birmingham, began a library shortly after the school began in 1848. There was also a Saving Fund, designed to help with the managing of domestic finances, as well as encouraging thrift and the sensible use of money. Sick clubs were in evidence too, with the larger classes having their own, and smaller classes joining together. Sewing, temperance and night schools were also in operation, and in 1890 a Young Women's Club was set up to pursue similar activities.

What can broadly be described as 'social work' was also widely in evidence. Although most Quakers tended to carry on these activities as individual members of various public bodies, taken together their involvement was impressive, and their work has left an indelible impression on Birmingham society. Birmingham Women's Settlement is a good example of a 'theory into practice' approach. Many Quakers were involved in the foundation of the Settlement in 1899, and its first Joint Warden, as already noted, was a Quaker, M Catharine Albright. The Settlement continues to this day, and describes itself as:

> Founded in 1899, Birmingham Settlement is one of the oldest charities in Birmingham. Part of a movement of social reform activists outraged by the plight of the poor in the 19th century, originally Birmingham Settlement's work concentrated on providing support to women and families in the seriously deprived St Mary's area (Birmingham Settlement, 2019).

Its original brief was to 'promote the physical, intellectual and moral' welfare of women and children, although this approach widened over the years, and today the Settlement is particularly concerned with the breaking down of barriers between different peoples and communities, and building a more integrated society. Training and development are also an important feature.

Housing was another important venture for Quakers. One of the pioneers of the movement for better housing conditions was the Quaker, William White. White had represented the previously mentioned St Mary's ward on the city council, one of the most crowded and insanitary areas of the city. His involvement with the Adult Schools had alerted him to the residents of the poorer areas of the city, and when the Artisan Dwellings Act of 1875 was passed, he eagerly chaired a Committee set up by the council to produce a report on the housing conditions in the city. An exhaustive report was produced on the poorer parts of the city. The result was the carrying out of the Birmingham Improvement Scheme, a wide-ranging set of changes to bring about improvements in those areas. The

Bournville estate, built by George Cadbury and his family, was itself an attempt at demonstrating what could be achieved in the fields of housing and a healthy environment. Quakers involved themselves in a range of other social initiatives too, including social institutes and their clubs, hospitals, the differing fields of education, prison visiting and schools for disabled children. Members of the Cadbury family were involved in many of these initiatives, but particularly the Adult Schools, where George Cadbury Snr. taught for over 50 years, and where his sons, Edward and George Jnr., also taught for many years.

To conclude, this section challenges the idea that Quakerism was a static and unchanging faith. A quick consideration ought to dispel this myth, but it is surprising how much literature talks of Quakerism as if it began in the seventeenth century, and has remained preserved in aspic ever since. This brief outline suggests that the particular form of Quakerism that came into being at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, helped feed into the kind of business behaviour championed by the Cadbury company, and for that matter the other Quaker chocolate firms like Fry's and Rowntree, all of which developed and grew during this period (Dellheim, 1987). A particularly good example of the flowering of this period in Quaker history were the Quaker Employer Conferences, noted above, that took place between 1918 and 1948. These provided an expression of Quaker testimony at its best, and demonstrated the real desire of Quaker employers during this period to engage with the social issues and problems that were besetting companies in the first half of the twentieth century (Jeremy, 1990). More will be said on these conferences later in the thesis. At this stage it is important to underscore the point that liberal Quakerism, as it developed at this time, helped produce a set of people whose ideas and beliefs were to play an important role in bringing about innovative working and business practices, practices that helped shape industrial relations practice in the UK. As this thesis goes on to argue, the motivations and beliefs of people matter, and understanding the context in which they developed is vital.

c) Birmingham background and industrial relations

Having provided a relatively brief, but reasonably comprehensive overview of Quakerism as a dynamic faith, including its influence on Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury family, there is now a need to address another important weakness in the literature on the Cadbury company and its development in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This is the lack of industrial context, and in particular the Birmingham and the West Midlands industrial relations scene at this time. In Britain generally, relationships within the workplace in the late nineteenth century were seen as essentially a private matter. This had been affirmed in the Royal Commission report on the law of Master and Servant in 1874 (Phelps-Brown, 1959, p. 271). Although laws against the restraint of trade and civil conspiracy appeared between the Combination Act of 1824 and the 1860s, by the 1870s collective bargaining was beginning to emerge in a few trades (Phelps-Brown, 1959, p. 177). Nevertheless, relations between employer and employee could be quite close, particularly

in the smaller and medium sized workplaces that typified much of the Birmingham industrial scene. Notably, Cadbury remained a city centre Birmingham company until 1879, when it began the move to the new and developing Bournville site. So, it was very much the case that these close employer-employee relationships were already a part of the Cadbury company ethos.

Although culturally the distance between employer and employee might remain small, the relations between them could be quite sharp, even brutal. Upward mobility in a market of small employers was still available, in that a tradesman could set up as an independent employer himself. This was particularly the case in a town like Birmingham, where sub-contracting and outwork were commonplace. Skilled workers enjoyed a high level of individual autonomy in the way they organised and carried out their work. Even so, the majority of the workforce in Birmingham was semi- or unskilled, so their independence and power remained constrained (Allen, 1929). Learning a particular trade or skill was a very practical matter, with most learning being 'on the job', leaving little opportunity for technical training or development. These standardised ways of learning and doing a job tended to lend themselves towards relatively peaceful relationships, and collective bargaining arrangements grew, so that by 1911 about a quarter of the workforce was covered by collective agreements. This had no doubt been helped by the growth of voluntary arbitration arrangements in areas of industry throughout the 1880s and 1890s, and this would have been reinforced by the Conciliation Act of 1896 (Phelps-Brown, 1959, p. 185).

Despite this relative harmony, industrial differences and disputes did increase in the late nineteenth century. New technology and new managerial practices began to reduce the autonomy of the skilled worker, an independence that was valued by the skilled craftsman (Harris, 1993, pp. 140-5). Alongside this there was something of an 'employers offensive' in the 1890s, designed to break the growing power of the unskilled who were beginning to see the value of combining in trade unions (Hobsbawm, 1964). This led directly to the campaign against the 'sweated' trades, a campaign that was enthusiastically supported by Edward Cadbury and his father, George (Mudie-Smith, 1906). This campaign was essentially one to ensure that wages would be the 'first claim' on industry, regardless of market conditions and the general success of the company. By the final decades of the nineteenth century, the realm of industrial relations had begun to move out of the private sphere into the public domain. The Board of Trade began collecting much workplace data, which added to that already collected by a number of Royal Commissions. Also, by now employers had to take some responsibility for accidents in the workplace. Furthermore, skilled workers travelling around the Empire began bringing back information on minimum wage legislation, limits on the hours worked per week, and mediation arrangements. All of this was beginning to entrench industrial relations much more firmly in the public arena.

As noted earlier, Birmingham had a strong Nonconformist tradition, and this undoubtedly influenced the development of Birmingham as a town and eventual city. This

clearly had a bearing on the industrial relationships that have just been considered. But the full extent of that tradition is worth noting, particularly from a Quaker point of view. During the nineteenth century, Chamberlain (a Unitarian) was very influential in developing the city in the period 1870-73. But his main ally in bringing about the improvement in housing in Birmingham was Alderman William White, a Quaker, more well-known for his work in the Adult Schools of Birmingham. In addition, John Bright was the Quaker MP for Birmingham from 1858 to 1889, and during the nineteenth century Birmingham had seven Quaker Mayors (Briggs, 1996, p. 156). The influence was clearly considerable, and the 'Nonconformist Conscience' and 'Social Gospel' played their parts in Birmingham's development at this time (Briggs and Sellers, pp. 89-93).

Birmingham's industrial development

Although the above information included something of a general view of industrial relations country-wide, Birmingham has long been recognised by historians as somewhat distinctive when set aside other major industrial towns that developed in the UK in the nineteenth century. In particular, it has been compared with the other major industrial cities of the time, like Bradford, Leeds and Manchester (Briggs, 1952, Stephens, 1964). Whilst Birmingham can trace its industrial roots back to the early eighteenth century (Skipp, 1997), long before the industrial revolution, these major textile towns in the North were heavily dependent on the industrial revolution to make major advances in the cotton industry. The advances that occurred in the textile trades tended to generate large-scale industry, quite unlike the scale and type of industry that evolved in Birmingham. Birmingham had instead made good use of efficient forms of hand tools, and applied an equally efficient division of labour that enabled high levels of productivity to be achieved. As early as 1770 Matthew Boulton was proclaiming:

> By the superactivity of our people and by the many mechanical contrivances and extensive apparatus which we are possess'd of, our men are enabled to do from twice to ten times the work which can be done without the help of such contrivances & even women and children to do more than men can do without them (quoted in Hopkins, 1998, p.7).

This kind of technology helped maintain the 'small workshop' in Birmingham far longer than in other major conurbations. That is not to say there were not some examples of large scale manufacture, there were, but the mainstay of the local economy was the small workshop. As already noted, this kind of arrangement could lead to close working relationships between 'master and servant', and could result in there being relative harmony between master and men for long periods in the Birmingham industrial relations scene.

Alan Fox, the noted industrial relations academic, researched Birmingham industrial relations for an Oxford BLitt in the early 1950s, and reported some of his findings in *Oxford Economic Papers* (Fox, 1955). Whilst Fox acknowledged that the 'small master' pattern of

industrial organization led to co-operative working relationships, he believed this explanation was too limited. His research provided a more detailed interpretation, one based on a closer observation of the differing tiers of factory owner, workshop proprietor and garret-master. The merchant intermediary, the 'factor', was a further complicating role. Together, these provided Fox with a more nuanced explanation for the relationships that seemed typical in the Birmingham workplace. Fox recognised that the peculiarities of industrial relations in Birmingham had been noted as early as the mid-nineteenth century, and this was usually related to the close relationships between small masters and their workers based on small scale industry. The Webbs, in their *History of Trade Unionism* (1894), had also noted the weak levels of trade union membership in Birmingham. However, this, of itself, does not provide a full explanation for the closeness of the relationships. Fox made the acute observations that direct personal relationships are not *invariably* amiable, nor was trade union membership *solely* the preserve of large establishments (Fox, 1955, p. 58).

The industrial structure of Birmingham and the Black Country was more complex than is often acknowledged. There were a number of large employers, with 100+ workers, and a larger number of workshops employing 50 or more workers. Well-known companies that came into being in this period included: Austin (cars), BSA (motorcycles), Dunlop (pneumatic tyres), Ansells (beer), Alfred Bird (custard), Typhoo (tea) and HP (sauce) (Chinn, 1994). Alongside these were a very significant number of small workshops, domestic outworkers and garret-masters employing between five and 10 workers. But size alone does not tell the full story. The method of industrial organisation was also important. The factory owner could usually provide his own working capital, including dealing with banks when needing credit. But the workshop proprietor and garret master were heavily dependent on the merchant intermediary, the 'factor', who not only distributed the products, but also provided raw materials and financial assistance. The factor could also organise the production of the small units to produce the finished product. On occasion, for a set payment, the factor would gather together his dependant workshop owners and garret masters in one workplace, and provide them with all the necessary materials to do their work. In essence, he became the employer and they the sub-contractors. Each sub-contractor was paid on a piece-work arrangement, and in turn they made their own arrangements with their 'underhands', usually paying a fixed day rate. This could be a profitable arrangement for the sub-contractor, if he organised his workers efficiently, cheaply, or both. Simple processes could often mean using young boys, usually the cheapest of all (Fox, 1955, p. 61).

In this kind of environment, status was fluid. The keen, hard-working 'underhand' was perfectly capable of rising to the ranks of the small master, just as the disciplined and energetic small master could rise to the ranks of the factor (Fox, 1955, p.61). These relationships and organisational structures made it difficult to formulate economic or social grievances on the basis of social class. The proud individual reigned supreme in the

Birmingham workplace, and relationships were very often couched in moral terms, perhaps influenced by the strong Nonconformist traditions typical of the city. Typically, employers were seen as being either 'good' or 'bad', rather than unscrupulous capitalists (Fox, 1955, p. 62). Such an environment created obvious problems for union recruitment, so union leaders were often reduced to invoking appeals to reason and fairness. In doing so, they could claim that reasonable pay and conditions would enable their members to lead decent Christian lives. Fox's analysis provides a more nuanced understanding of working relationships in Birmingham during this period; more refined than those provided by the more standard histories (Briggs, 1952, Hopkins, 1998). These attitudes, values and general cultural closeness of employer and employee remained much the same until just before the First World War. It was only then that changing circumstances began to provide a more polarised workforce, one more inclined to engage in industrial action.

Trade unionism in Birmingham

What did this mean for industrial relations in Birmingham? How did this relative harmony grow and develop, and what were the factors influencing its development? Furthermore, was there complete harmony, or even within an environment outwardly calm and quiescent, were there matters bubbling up beneath the surface that interrupted this peaceful set of relationships? A brief outline of the growing presence of trade unions and trade union activity in Birmingham will further help set the industrial relations scene. From the mid nineteenth century, trade unionism was of growing importance in Birmingham workplaces. As with other major industrial conurbations, this began through the growth and development of craft trade unions. As Birmingham was very much the home of a 'metal bashing' set of industries, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers was the first to make its presence known. Birmingham Trades Council came into being in 1866, six years after London Trades Council, and both were instrumental in bringing about the first Trades Union Congress in 1868. The first Birmingham Trades Council represented 13 trades, including woodworkers, shoemakers, tailors, painters, basket-makers, iron makers and coach makers. Its aim was "to watch over the social and political rights of the workers, and generally to further the benefits of trade unionism" (Corbett, 1966, p. 26). The Birmingham Trades Council must have been a well-respected trades council, because it was called upon to organise and host the second national Trades Union Congress in Birmingham in 1869, which lasted for six days and received 47 delegates.

Trades unions were growing in strength at this time, and continued to grow and agitate during the 1870s, a prosperous period for industry. These times were a period of considerable change in Birmingham, where the Liberals dominated local politics. Joseph Chamberlain was the dominant political figure, and during his period as Mayor, 1873-76, he introduced a number of transformative schemes to improve daily life for Birmingham citizens. At the same time, a notable development was the formation of the Union of Brass Workers in 1872. Brass working had become one of the staple industries of Birmingham,

with a growing workforce. William John Davis was the instigator and first secretary of the Brass Workers Union, and was to become a key figure in Birmingham (and to a degree, national) industrial relations (Hopkins, 2002, p. 124). Both Davis and Chamberlain were firm believers in conciliation in trade disputes, and peaceful negotiation was widely supported by Birmingham trade union leaders. Indeed, Corbett, the historian of Birmingham Trades Council, described the 1870s and 1880s as 'cloth-capped Chamberlainism' (Corbett, 1966, Ch 3). By 1886 the Associated Society of Engineers had joined Birmingham Trades Council, and an increase in trade union activity had arisen during the 1880s and 1890s, partially fuelled by the existing 'non-unionism'. Trade unionism certainly spread in this period, with the affiliated membership of Birmingham Trades Council increasing from 25 in 1885 to 56 in 1893 (Corbett, 1966, p. 49).

It has been noted that the period between 1910 and the beginning of the First World War was a period of increasing militancy within the workplace, at least as witnessed by the increases in disputes and industrial action (Lyddon, 2012). Between 1911 and 1914, trade union membership rose from 3.13m to 4.14 m. But this big increase was in part the result of government legislation. The National Insurance Act of 1911 provided for compulsory insurance of the working classes against ill health (as well as limited unemployment insurance in a small number of vulnerable trades). The insurance schemes themselves tended to be entrusted to those kinds of societies 'approved' by the government. This tended to be venerable Friendly Societies like the Oddfellows and the Foresters, but it also included the older craft unions, as they were grouped in the same category, not least because they already provided friendly society type benefits. This decision by government resulted in many workers joining a trade union, simply to be a member of an 'approved' society. This brought about a significant rise in trade union membership, although some of the increase was also due to the increase in unskilled and semi-skilled workers joining the 'new' unions. In turn, this growth was acknowledged by governmental authorities, resulting in senior trade union leaders becoming important members of the local community, often in the guise of local councillors, School Board members and Justices of the Peace (Corbett, 1966, Ch 6).

An interesting example of the peculiar kind of relationship that could exist in Birmingham, was the Bedstead Alliance, set up by W Mills, a manufacturer, and W J Davis, secretary of the Brass Workers Union (Corbett, 1966, p. 57). This arrangement between the union and the employers involved guarantees and assurances on both sides. In return for agreeing to work for Alliance employers only, Brass Workers Union members were the only ones employed by the Alliance employers. The aim of the union was better pay for their members, and the objective of the employers was higher profits. A simple example of the way in which this benefited both parties was for the employer to increase the sale price of brass fittings by 10%, and union employees would receive a wage increase of 5%. It was simple and straightforward, and for a while effective. At its peak, some 500 'masters' and 20,000 workers were covered by the arrangements. But after a while retailers began

objecting to rigid selling prices forced on them by the arrangement, so the Bedstead Alliance broke up in the early years of the twentieth century. Even so it did re-form for a while in 1912. W J Davis summarised the spirit of the alliances in 1900:

> We represent a community of interest. The employers find the capital, business capacity and interest, and should have the lion's share of the profit. We find the technical skill and muscle which the product requires. The stomach must be fed; raiment and shelter is essential for the reproduction of mankind. Therefore you must apportion fairly the profits as between Capital and Labour.
> (Dalley, 1914, p. 211)

Whilst it would not be wise to typify Davis and his enthusiasm for the alliances as being entirely representative of what was happening in Birmingham industrial relations at this time, it is fair to say it represented a mood for co-operation and agreement, much more typical of Birmingham than the stirrings of class-based opposition and militancy elsewhere. These were exactly the kind of peaceful and co-operative arrangements that suited a Quaker company like Cadbury. It followed that when recruiting their workers from the Birmingham pool of labour, Cadbury's were already recruiting workers that were more often than not familiar with close, relatively peaceful, working relationships between employer and employee. The Trades Council report of 1898 said as much:

> There has been an entire absence of any serious labour disputes, a spirit of conciliation having prevailed, which has enabled workmen to meet organised employers, and thus by reasoning and reciprocity, decisions have been carried out which have maintained an honourable peace, beneficial to workmen, employers, and the community.
> (quoted in Briggs, 1952, p. 63)

This conciliatory approach seemed to hold sway for much of the first decade of the twentieth century, only faltering a little in the period just prior to the First World War.

The gradual incorporation of Birmingham trade unionism into the workings of the city and other manifestations of local government took a step forward after the Labour Representation Committee (LRC) was set up in 1900. Birmingham Trades Council began supporting the LRC in 1901, and organised the annual conference of 1902. This incorporation into local labour politics was significant because prior to this most trade unionists and their unions had supported the Liberal Party and variations of Lib-Lab pacts. As noted earlier, this comparative calm was occasionally punctuated by industrial strife. In 1910 the Birmingham bakers went on strike. This is interesting because, as attested to in the biography of Edward Cadbury, it had a Cadbury connection. Julia Varley wrote an article on the success of the strike for the *Bournville Works Magazine*, monthly journal of the Cadbury company. That the magazine was prepared to carry such an article is itself an indication of the implicit support the Cadbury company was giving to trade union

membership and activity. More will be said about Cadbury support, particularly that of Edward Cadbury, later in this section.

W J Davis and the trade union ethos

Jamie Scott, in a recent paper discussing the politics of the Birmingham trade union leader, W J Davis, provides perhaps the best and fullest example of the kind of trade unionism that characterised many Birmingham workplaces (Scott, 2013, pp. 80 – 98). As noted earlier, W J Davis was a Birmingham brass worker, and leader of his union, the National Society of Amalgamated Brass Workers. Born in 1848, he helped form the brass workers union in 1872, becoming its first general secretary. Aside from a period between 1883 and 1889, when he served as a factory inspector, he spent the rest of his working life in the brass workers union. He was also elected to the TUC standing orders committee in 1880, and to the parliamentary committee in 1881, and, after his time as a factory inspector, returned to those positions again in 1893 and 1896 respectively. His final accolade was to be elected president of the TUC in 1913. He was clearly a figure of some standing in the wider trade union movement.

But, Scott suggests, Davis's form of 'labourism' was far more radical and flexible than has been suggested by some, who seem to view him as something of a 'class collaborator'. For Davis, community, and in particular, the working class community, provided him with a politics and a rationale with direction and purpose. Davis saw society in terms of 'communities'. There was the community to which all citizens belonged, and this was the nation-state. In other words, loyalty to the state, a form of nationalism, was important. Alongside this, Davis drew upon his own working class culture and community to draw inspiration and fortitude, buoyed up and defined by the values of autonomy, co-operation and self-reliance. Davis was unabashed in claiming that the wider society could learn much from the labour movement and its sense of compassion, interdependence and joint obligation. Throughout his life he was a long-standing defender and promoter of these values, suggesting they could teach the upper-classes much about self-restraint and social responsibility.

Although Davis came from within the Lib-Lab tradition, he stood some distance from this in being bolder and more forthright, not least in wanting independent labour representation. Equally, he resisted the attractions of any kind of 'pure' socialism, preferring the much more pragmatic and flexible approach typical of the English empirical philosophical tradition. Davis was aware, and appreciative of, the work Joseph Chamberlain had done as a Liberal Mayor of Birmingham, not least the significant improvements he brought about in the living standards of the Birmingham working class. However, much as he could support the Liberals for pragmatic reasons, he remained wedded to independent labour representation. Davis would not allow his sense of class cohesiveness to lead to class isolation. He was happy to collaborate with Liberals or socialists, whichever produced the

best arrangement for those he represented. Scott suggests Davis's speech to the 1902 LRC conference best represents his pragmatic, flexible political thought:

> Although I support the national Labour Party's policy of running on independent lines, and would oppose a proposal to merge into any other political body, I am sensible enough to know that no political force can be made which refuses aid or is independent of votes. Because, if you want to succeed, barter, coalesce, even join the ranks for the time being of others, and make alliances of offence and defence, provided you always keep your own association separate and distinct. Leaders of the Labour party should have no breach.
> (quoted in Scott, 2013, p. 97)

Scott's concluding quote emphasises the rounded philosophy of Davis, and gives us some idea of the key beliefs of an important trade union leader. The political thoughts of trade union leaders are deserving of more attention by labour historians, and Scott's research helps provide insight into a peculiar, but nevertheless important, trade union leader in this period:

> His philosophy placed trade unionism at the heart of politics: it was the key mechanism for social change; the model for the community; and the inspiration for working-class politics as well as upper-class culture (Scott, 2013, p. 98).

Edward Cadbury would not have been unsympathetic to these four elements of Davis's philosophy, as they coincided with the Quaker tenets of a strong sense of community and independent action. Central to this thesis is that Edward was a strong supporter of trade unionism: this was demonstrated in much of his practical and written work; as already noted, he was a key figure in the Anti-Sweating League, and this body helped bring about social change through the Trade Boards Act of 1909, an Act of Parliament enthusiastically supported by the trade unions. His sense of community was admirably demonstrated by the Bournville village, initiated by his father, but keenly supported by the rest of the Cadbury family. Finally, as a Quaker from within the dissenter tradition, he was aware of the persecution Quakers had suffered in earlier generations, and would have found much to support in Davis's critique of 'upper-class' culture.

Despite Scott's powerful outline of the life and times of W J Davis, perhaps the best summary of the life of Davis remains that of Fox in the conclusion to his article on late nineteenth century industrial relations in Birmingham:

> The figure of Davis has value as a symbol as well as for the intrinsic interest of his life. In his trade union career, his philosophy of industrial relationships, his strategy and tactics, his transition from a leader of profit-earning subcontractors to a leader of disciplined factory wage labour, he symbolised not only the pattern of industrial relations in Birmingham in the latter half of the nineteenth century but also the changes which began to overtake it in the years leading up to 1914.
> (Fox, 1955, p. 70).

Edward Cadbury's specific contribution

A good example of the way in which Edward Cadbury helped and supported women workers through trade unionism occurred in the summer of 1909. A Girls' Social Service League was set up in the Bournville plant, instigated by Edward Cadbury, but promoted with some enthusiasm and vigour by Julia Varley and others within the company. Chairing the first meeting on 6th May, Cadbury described the aims of the League as being "to bring about, *through combination*, better conditions for the working girls of Birmingham" (*BWM*, June 1909, p. 229, my italics). In addressing the meeting, Cadbury referred to his own experience of researching the sweated industries in Birmingham, and the low wages, long hours and poor working conditions experienced by most women in those trades (Cadbury, Matheson and Shann,1906). Cadbury's comments were echoed by George Shann, one of Cadbury's co-authors on the research. Shann noted how apathy and ignorance had allowed women workers to be exploited in the workplace. Recognising that the problems of women workers were not peculiar to Birmingham, he noted that the more downtrodden women workers were, the more blind they seemed to the possibilities of combination. He wanted the women workers at Bournville to help Birmingham women workers to organise for better pay and conditions:

> the aim was that they should organise themselves, not that they should be organised by the people of the middle-class interested in the movement (*BMW*, June 1909, p. 229).

This was another example of the desire of Cadbury and the company for the women workers to take responsibility for their own needs. Again, there is no hint of paternalism here. Quite the contrary. Women workers are encouraged to join the appropriate trade union at the company, as well as help and assist other women workers to organise in Birmingham firms. Hardly the kind of behaviour that would endear the Cadbury's to other employers in the Birmingham area!

Julia Varley was the third speaker, and a steadfast champion of women's rights. She began by recalling her own experiences of fighting for the women's cause. Beginning as a working woman and a young trade unionist in Bradford, she had been appointed as Labour representative on the Board of Guardians. She was also familiar with 'tramping' for work, having tramped to Liverpool and stayed in the tramping wards. Further experiences included living in London as a 'nine penny dosser', and two terms of imprisonment at Holloway gaol for suffragette activities. Together, these experiences had taught Julia the deprivation and suffering endured by working class women, and urged the women to organise and agitate for better pay and conditions. Other speakers encouraged and supported what had been said, and by August 1909 it was reported that the Women's Social Service League had 768 members (*BWM*, August, 1909, p. 313). By October a large meeting of Cadbury women workers gathered to hear of progress with the Social Service League. The meeting was again chaired by Edward Cadbury, and Julia Varley was also present. In his

address, Cadbury emphasised the importance of self-help among working class women, infused with a sense of Christian charity:

> When Mr Shann and I were making our investigations in Birmingham (published in *Women's Work and Wages*), The Girls' Club movement was the one hopeful thing.....Girls who are themselves workers make better helpers than ladies from Edgbaston [Edgbaston was, and remains, the most affluent suburb of Birmingham]... There are two ingredients in the remedy of this evil. We have to mix love and knowledge. Neither is any use without the other.
> (*BWM*, November, 1909, pp 10-11).

It was reported at the meeting that £40 had been raised (equivalent to over £3500 in 2020). £15 was spent directly on organising the Cradley Heath women chain makers, 600 of whom had joined the National Federation of Women Workers. £15 had been allocated for work among women in Birmingham, £5 spent on printing, leaving £5 for further use.

Further reports continued to be made in the *Bournville Works Magazine* over the next year, and in August 1910 the magazine reported the Social Service League's first Annual Meeting of 7th July. Once again, one of the speakers was Julia Varley. Her report on work carried out by the League concentrated on sweated workers. Ever the practitioner, Varley illustrated her report with examples of children's clothes made under sweated conditions, along with the pitiful levels of pay received for the work. Reference was also made to the campaign against sweating in the baking trades. Birmingham Trades Council was supporting the campaign, and

> Miss Varley appealed to the members of the League to stand together and help this magnificent work of awakening the women of Birmingham to the great possibilities before them (*BWM*, August, 1910, p. 313).

Further reports were given, including reference to educational activities within the League, along with a brief final comment:

> In his concluding remarks, the Chairman (Edward Cadbury) stated that we had proved the fallacy of the idea that women would not combine to help others, unless they themselves were getting some material benefit (*BWM*, August, 1910, p. 313).

The Women's Social Service League and its activities continued to be reported in the *BWM* over the next six years, demonstrating this was no flash-in-the-pan movement. The November 1910 issue of the *BWM* was reporting on a visit by Mary Macarthur, leader of the National Federation of Women Workers (*BWM*, November, 1910, pp. 406-7). She gave particular attention to the struggle of the women chain makers of Cradley Heath, praising the Bournville Social Service League for its practical and financial support. In the same issue, Julia Varley had written an article on 'Cradley and its Chain makers', just as the strike was coming to a successful conclusion (*BWM*, November, 1910, pp. 412-13).

Much of the money and work of the Bournville Women's Social Service League was channelled through the Birmingham Women Workers Organisation Committee. Julia Varley was the secretary of the Organisation Committee, a body specifically formed to agitate for improved labour conditions for women. Of the £147 17s 10d that accumulated in members contributions during its first year, the Women's Social Service League gave the Organisation Committee £120 (*BWM*, October, 1910, p. 367). The following year, £90 10s was given, much of the work and money being used to support women in other sweated trades like the galvanising trades, needlework and tailoring (*BWM*, May, 1911, p. 150). By the beginning of 1912, Julia Varley was writing to the *Bournville Works Magazine* to thank Cadbury employees for the money given to her strike collections during the year (*BWM*, January, 1912, p. 26). In April of that year the secretary of the Workers Union, Councillor Jack Beard (a stalwart of the Birmingham Trades Council and soon to be National President of the Workers Union), addressed the Social Service League (*BWM*, May, 1912, p. 150), and in June of the same year Julia Varley was again writing an article on the sweated trades, this time the women brick makers of the Black Country (*BWM*, June, 1912, pp. 172-3). In March 1912 Edward Cadbury chaired a meeting organised by the Birmingham Women Workers' Organisation Committee, and again it seems to have been well attended. Its purpose was "to interest people generally in the organising of women and girls into trade unions in order that they may effectively work towards a betterment of their conditions" (*BWM*, April, 1912, p. 107). The meeting was addressed by the triumvirate of Edward Cadbury, Jack Beard, and Julia Varley, and again there was an emphasis on organising women into trade unions and gaining equal pay for equal work (*BWM*, April, 1912, p. 107).

The trade union work of the Birmingham Women Workers Organisation Committee continued until late 1913, by which time it seems to have achieved its initial objectives, and was dissolved. George Shann, colleague and co-author with Edward Cadbury as well as recently elected socialist Councillor on Birmingham City Council, gave the reasons:

> The main reason for this being that the committees work has served its purpose in interesting the various trade unions in the question of women's organisation. Miss Julia Varley is now retained by the Workers Union to organise women in Birmingham and the Midlands. It was agreed that it was much better for the organising work to be done by the unions themselves, than by an outside committee, such as the Birmingham Women Worker's Organisation Committee, although experience showed that such a committee was necessary in the first place.
> (*BWM*, Oct, 1913, p. 329)

This is a fascinating concluding comment by Shann, because it underlines that Cadbury and the Cadbury company had no interest in being a paternalistic employer. Instead, whilst helping to support and encourage trade unionism among Bournville women workers and women workers in the wider Birmingham industrial and commercial sector, they were committed to the women developing and running the trade union organisation *through their own self-activity*. This was a constant theme within Cadbury.

Taken together, then, the preceding elements and examples of Birmingham's industrial relations environment provide something of an explanation for the comparatively harmonious relationships that presided in Birmingham for long periods. The industrial and structural development of industry in Birmingham made for close working relationships between employer and employee, even if they were not always harmonious. However, the development was not always steady, uniform and progressive. There were plenty of industrial disputes, particularly in the 5 – 10 years before the First World War. Nevertheless, at the city level, Chamberlain and others were bringing about improved living conditions for the working classes, and at the level of the workplace, trade unionists like Davis provided an impulse towards co-operation rather than conflict. Even employers like Cadbury, who in this period was promoting better working conditions for women workers through trade union membership, was also experimenting with shop committees and other forms of co-operation between employer and employee in the family firm. The atmosphere remained one of working together, rather than searching for disagreement and dispute. Such an environment provided the backdrop to what became a highly productive and successful local economy. The Birmingham and West Midland economies remained the backbone of the UK's manufacturing heartland right up to the general decline of British manufacturing in the 1980s.

Having provided in this section the religious and urban backdrop to Cadbury's intellectual development, the necessary context has now been established to situate Cadbury in the milieu of his time and place. There next follows a review of the writings of Edward Cadbury, which provide an outline of his development as a substantial figure in early British management thought and practice. Whilst commentators have made reasonable use of Cadbury's final book (1912), far less attention has been given to his earlier works. Yet it is in his earlier works (1906, 1907), that we find his most impassioned arguments in favour of social justice for women in the workplace.

Section Two - The writings of Edward Cadbury

Introduction

This section covers the writings of Edward Cadbury, as well as the *Handbook* of the *Daily News* Sweated Trades Exhibition, the family-owned newspaper. Although Edward Cadbury did not write or compile the Sweated Trades *Handbook*, he was a key figure in organising the sweated trades exhibition, and the exhibition was central to the work he was doing. It is therefore appropriate that the handbook is considered along with his other written work, as it undoubtedly represented the work he was engaged in at the time. However, before reviewing this written work, there is a need to situate it in the intellectual milieu of the period. In the mid-nineteenth century, Britain was at the forefront of the industrial world (Hobsbawm, 1999). The ideas that were being discussed and debated at the time were consistent with that industrial strength. A term like 'society' seemed to have little practical use, as the ideas of the time, such as the laissez-faire economy, evangelical theology and philosophical utilitarianism, all relied upon notions of the 'rational individual'. 'Organic' views of society were not unknown, but were mainly the preserve of High Church Anglicanism. In particular, ideas of a 'collective' nature were resisted as an explanatory variable in British public life, although there could be some examples that proved the exception, e.g. the Chartist movement and the demonstration at Peterloo. The powerful culture of 'common sense', 'no-nonsense' British empiricism was typical of much political, legal and academic life, and led to the questioning of notions such as group identity or society (Harris, 1993).

But changes in thinking and approach were afoot by the mid-nineteenth century. In literature, novelists like Dickens (in *Hard Times*) and George Eliot (in *Felix Holt*) portrayed individuals as being at the mercy of forces outside their control. The Church began moving away from personal salvation towards the idea of building the 'Kingdom of Heaven' on earth (Note 9), and ideas like the doctrine of positivism, formulated by the French sociologist, Comte, began to be heard in Britain. The 'science of society' and associated language entered the public vocabulary (Gane, 2006). Other changes that helped shape and bolster something of a collective identity, was the spread of compulsory education, mass-circulation newspapers and large-scale political organisation. By the late nineteenth century, Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) introduced the realm of evolutionary ideas, and Herbert Spencer believed human societies were living organisms, so began developing systematic approaches to the study of society. This promotion of social science and, in particular, the gathering of much statistical data, produced large-scale empirical enquiries into practical social problems. Charles Booth produced *Life and Labour in London*, (1902), of which Beatrice Potter (Webb) did much work on the 'sweated' trades; David Schloss researched the field of wages (in *Methods of Industrial Remuneration* (2nd ed. 1894)); Seebohm Rowntree analysed poverty in the city of York (in *Poverty: A Study of Town Life*, 1901); and

William Beveridge did early work on the nature of unemployment (in *Unemployment: A Problem of* Industry, 1909). Harris noted the common approach typified by these studies:

> ....all these works were deeply grounded in the view that society was a living organism, that social practices and institutions were either progressive or recessive, and that social efficiency and survival were determined by structural 'organization' and capacity for adaptation to external social change.

In other words, this was *not*

> a predominantly descriptive and un-theoretical approach to the study of social questions....(Harris, 1998, p. 226)

Evolutionary ideas suggested there were forces beyond individuals that allowed people to believe they were not entirely in control of their lives. Such social forces were not the product of God, character or nature, but instead of a social system that they had neither designed nor had much influence over. At this time, social class was a term that was becoming more widely used, not simply as an economic category, but also to denote economic inequality. Although Marxist thinking could be discovered in a range of bodies in the fields of socialism and trade unionism, it was not particularly influential at the time (McKibbin, 1984).

More influential than Marxism amongst the British intelligentsia was 'idealist' social thought. Kantian idealism (the external world was unknowable without certain a priori categories) was around in British philosophy during the nineteenth century. Going back as far as Plato, this approach believed state and society were logically prior to the individual (Nicholson, 1990, pp. 1 – 2). As such, the goal of human association was pursuit of the public good, not the pursuit of selfish private satisfaction. A common viewpoint was developing among both intellectuals and the educated and informed public, and this was that ethical norms and evolutionary thought could be harmonised. The aim of social policy and social progress, it was argued, was to impose rationality and order on the amoral and inefficient natural world. Against this backdrop, in 1913 Edward Cadbury engaged in a symposium with a range of other engineers and industrialists to discuss the ideas pioneered by F W Taylor, the father of scientific management. That symposium was organised under the auspices of the Sociological Society, a body set up to promote just such aims:

> The Sociological Society, which was founded in 1904, ... committed itself to discovering the 'underlying laws of society' – but to do so by studying 'mind' and 'purpose' as well as the statistical regularities of social life.
> (Harris, 1998. p. 230)

By the 1880s, the Victorian boom of the mid-nineteenth century had ended, and Germany and the USA had caught up with Britain in their share of world trade. This worried the British establishment, as it challenged Britain's industrial and military power. The Third

Reform Act of Gladstone's second administration, 1884, had given most adult men the vote. Mention has already been made of the impact of Darwin's major work, published in 1859, but J S Mill's *On Liberty*, published in the same year, was also influential. Utilitarianism was losing its sheen, and people like Leonard Hobhouse saw liberalism as a modernising project, drawing on the tradition of idealism to make his case (Hobhouse, 1911). It has already been noted that idealism was a school of thought associated with Kant and continental philosophy, but by this time Hegel, who, of course, was 'turned on his head' by Marx (i.e. materialism replacing idealism),was the more influential idealist thinker (Clarke, 1997, p. 44). His thinking was completely at odds with the hard-nosed British tradition of empiricism.

Thomas Hill Green, the Balliol philosopher and tutor, was from Yorkshire where his father was rector of Birkin in the Selby district of North Yorkshire. Although he had died at the age of 45 in 1882, his importance as an influential thinker had grown in the intervening period. Some of this was probably due to the list of former students who carried the flame of Green's philosophy into public life. Leonard Hobhouse first got involved in local politics in Oxford, before becoming a journalist for the Manchester Guardian. Arnold Toynbee set up Toynbee Hall, a University settlement in the East End of London, and Herbert Asquith went on to become Liberal Prime Minister. The prevailing philosophy of the time had been empiricism, the view that we learn about the world by *experiencing* it. T H Green contested this view, suggesting there was no clear division between the human mind and the external world. Instead, he saw them as something of a continuum. For Green, the mind was an active participant in *creating the world we experience* (Carter, 2003). It followed naturally from this perspective that idealists like Green thought of society as an organism composed of human beings, and together these human beings became something more than the sum of them as individuals. Their interconnectedness meant that they all contributed to the health of the organism as a body. This interconnectedness meant that individuals were citizens as well as individual human beings, and as such had the ability to lead meaningful lives and contribute to the 'common good'. Green was a committed Liberal Party supporter, and believed in the ideal of rational and self-reliant individuals. But, Green also believed that the state, both at local and national level, had the moral responsibility to help create a society that promoted individual freedom, whilst also contributing to the common good. This meant the state should do more than simply maintain social order and remove barriers to trade. The state should also get involved in areas like education and housing (Carter,2003, pp. 41 - 44).

Green's ideas, and those of his contemporaries who shared his ideas and ideals, produced important shifts in middle-class attitudes towards the poor, particularly amongst Christians (Carter, 2003, Chs. 4 and 5). But it is worth noting that whilst this set of ideas was gaining ascendancy in the intellectual climate of Britain, there remained a substantial minority who retained the Samuel Smiles *Self-Help* philosophy. They continued to believe it was in the hands of the working class to raise themselves up in the world through self-

discipline and hard work: ".....moralists as diverse as Ruskin and Samuel Smiles prescribed]work] as man's highest calling" (Harris, 1993, p. 123). Arthur Marshall, the foremost economist of his day, promoted the classical market economy, and it was still commonplace to refer to the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor. Alongside these currents, and encouraged by the economic downturn of the mid-to late 1880s, the working classes were beginning to push for greater political representation. A variety of groups emerged, like the Social Democratic Federation, as well as individual radicals like Keir Hardie, Eleanor Marx and William Morris. All pledged support for the working classes. New Liberals were emerging too, like C P Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*. Alongside this, the dividing lines between liberals and socialists were becoming blurred. The Third Reform Act of 1884 had given more workers the vote, trade union membership had grown from 0.5 million in 1880 to 2 million by 1900, and something like a Lib-Lab arrangement emerged in politics. But there remained others, like Beatrice and Sidney Webb, who believed in a more radical, specifically socialist approach.

John Hobson, a renowned economist of the time, and another student of T H Green, promoted idealism through his writings on political economy. He advocated more state intervention, particularly in the light of Britain's declining share of world trade, (mainly due to the competition from Germany and the USA). There is some suggestion that Hobson coined the term 'unemployment' (Renwick, 2017, p. 70), but he is mainly known for his theory of 'under consumption', an element of Keynesian economics. For Hobson, many of the problems of the modern industrial society could be put right if the wealthy simply spent more at home, or, alternatively, the state did it for them by taxing them. These views received further support when a competing economy, like that of Germany, was using a different model to make significant inroads into Britain's share of world trade. The laissez-faire approach, still held in high esteem by the traditionalists in Britain, was facing criticism. The German approach involved the state, employer and employee working together to provide the worker with insurance against ill health and unemployment, and these ideas were gaining ground among the new liberals in Britain. "Kant, Hegel and other German philosophers began to be more widely studied in English and Scottish universities in the 1870's, a move that coincided with a great revival of academic interest in classical idealism and particularly in the works of Plato" (Harris, 1993, pp. 227-8). This corporate approach certainly had its merits, and did promote ideas of collaboration and co-operation, but alone was no panacea. The Factory Acts of the nineteenth century had been examples of state intervention in the economy, but the new liberals were looking for more. However, despite their desires, the new liberals had to wait. The Liberal Party had split in two over Home Rule for Ireland in 1886. The largest group of Liberals remained loyal to Gladstone and the Irish cause, but the Liberal Unionists, led by Joseph Chamberlain, helped keep Lord Salisbury's Tories in power. Eventually the Liberals did return to power in 1906, under the leadership of Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Initially they remained as a party of free traders, but before long moved towards the new liberals and their policies (Renwick, 2017, p. 58).

But in concluding this introduction to the intellectual and political climate of the Edwardian period, to what degree did this new emphasis on the collective identity of 'society' influence political practice and the analysis of social problems? As we have noted, from the 1880s international trade rivalry and the shifting balance of world power generated much anxious criticism of Britain's libertarian social and economic traditions. The politics behind both the Fabians and New Liberalism was based on the view that 'society' contributed an important element to productive processes and wealth creation – and as such was entitled to 'tax' this for public provision. Alongside this, an interesting shift was also taking place in the trade union movement. The older craft unions had sought legal and procedural reforms, but the newer unions of the 1890s and 1900s sought more ambitious substantive and structural reforms. This notion of the 'social organisation' became a recurring theme of the Edwardian age. Even so, this should not necessarily be interpreted as support for political 'collectivism'. Whilst many supporters of evolutionary and idealist views did support intervention and state control, for example William Beveridge, others, like Beatrice Webb in her early work, did not. The result was that a Liberal statesman like R B Haldane saw income tax and old age pensions as a product of the Hegelian idea of the state (or 'common will'), whereas Sidney Webb and many trade unionists still viewed society in utilitarian terms as little more than a collection of individuals (Crowley, 1987). A good example of the complexity of such thinking might be the syndicalist and guild socialist movements. On the one hand they subscribed to the view of collective group identity, whilst on the other rejecting an all-embracing state. Instead, they held that society was made up of semi-autonomous interlocking groupings. These diverse views often resulted in a variety of proposed answers to social problems. So, whilst issues around crime, alcohol and unemployment might all be seen as social problems, they could also be viewed through the kaleidoscope of personality, character, individuality, as well as society and the social context (Renwick, 2017).

Finally, in concluding this review of the intellectual and political climate of the late Victorian and early Edwardian Age, there is a need to clarify my understanding of the relationship between T H Green's idealism and Quakerism at this time. This is perhaps best summarised in a recent work by Matt Carter, *T H Green and the Development of Ethical Socialism* (2003):

> As the dominant philosophy at the end of the nineteenth century, idealism had an impact on two levels. Firstly idealism provided a useful mechanism for resolving the political, social, philosophical and religious dilemmas of the Victorian era. The unifying and synthesising nature of idealism meant that, between two apparently intractable views, the idealists could find a middle way. In the debate about the state, the idealists saw no problem in supporting both state action and individual freedom. While the religious orthodox were rejecting the discoveries of biology and geology, and scientists were abandoning the mysteries of religion, the idealists maintained a position which combined the theistic and scientific. Caught between character and circumstances, the idealists used both as the explanation for the

> motivation of moral beings.....this vision of ideas as organic and inter-related underpinned the idealists' political thought and had significant implications for the development of socialist ideas.
> (Carter, 2003, 'Introduction')

Using Cadbury as an example, he sat easily within this tradition, a tradition that was based on the four notions of: the common good; a positive view of freedom; equality of opportunity, and an expanded role for the state. For example, he was always respectful and conscious of individual freedom and the right to independent action. His written work as well as his example in the workplace, provided for the worker to develop him or herself through education, often provided by the company, as well as vocational opportunities to develop their workplace skills. The freedom to join a trade union was always encouraged, as was setting up sports and social groups to encourage the development of the all-round person. As regards state involvement, Cadbury promoted the living wage, the Old Age Pension and good quality housing for all. He sat firmly within the idealist tradition that incorporated modernist forms of thinking at the time, as well the kind of ethical socialism supported by Green's students, Tawney, Henry Scott Holland, the founder of the Christian Social Union, and Charles Gore, Bishop of Birmingham. Within the world of Quakerism, alongside Cadbury, Seebohm Rowntree wrote much on the workplace (e.g. 1918, 1921), and Maurice Rowntree wrote *Co-operation or Chaos?*, (1918). The standard text on this period in British Quakerism is Kennedy, (2001), subtitled *The Transformation of a Religious Community*, which says much about the significant change in Quaker belief and practice which occurred at this time.

Framing Cadbury's approach to IR

Having established the political and intellectual framework of the period, it will become clear that Edward Cadbury and the views of the Cadbury family sat squarely within this tradition of English idealism. This will be demonstrated in the review of Cadbury's written work, and by reference to the workplace practices introduced in the company. Combining the role of individual initiative and responsibility alongside state involvement and intervention fitted the Cadbury vision perfectly. This can now be explored through the industrial relations approach demonstrated in the work of Edward Cadbury. To do so, I will draw upon the recent work of Heery, who reminds us that one of the few industrial relations ideas that has retained its durability over the years is that of the 'frames of reference' typology (Heery, 2015). Heery is specifically looking at pluralism in connection with worker participation, and that is precisely the approach Cadbury took, i.e. the extent to which workers should have some say and influence in the running of the company. As part of his comprehensive analysis of the pluralist frame of reference, Heery provides us with a set of standards we can apply to evaluate participation in practice, and use will be made of these later in the thesis (Heery, 2015, pp. 28-9). This approach was provided with something of a firm foundation by Fox in his research paper for the Donovan Commission (Fox, 1966).

In his paper, Fox differentiated between unitarist and pluralist approaches to making sense of industrial relations. Later contributors to the debate added a further dimension, that of the critical or radical approach. This latter dimension contains within its borders a wide variety of opinion, ranging from those adopting something of a radical pluralist approach (Fox again, a modified approach he later developed, (1974)), to those adopting a more mainstream Marxist approach (Hyman, 1975). These three approaches explore the relationship between employer and employee in the workplace, each having a range of principal objectives. This employer-employee relationship inevitably fluctuates over time and space, and is subject to both internal and external constraints and pressures. Even so, the relationship in most organisations endures for long periods of time without any obvious breakdowns or tensions. A deeper investigation of relationships in the workplace would no doubt identify difficulties and tensions, but if strike statistics are anything to go by in the period covered in this thesis, the period from the beginning of the century to 1912 was very quiet (less than four strikes per hundred thousand workers, and less than 3% of the workforce involved directly in strike activity) (Gilbert, 1996). There were spikes of strike activity immediately prior to the First World War and after, and of course the general strike of 1926, but other than that the period 1900 to 1938 was comparatively peaceful. The independent observer could easily conclude that, aside from these three periods of intense, focused strike activity, this period was one of comparative calm in industrial relations.

Much of Cadbury's work concentrated on developing a good working relationship with the Cadbury workforce, and this can be seen in both his workplace practices as well as his written work. Over the years, commentators have focused their attentions on the Cadbury workplace and the way in which the workers were treated. There is clearly much sense in this, as it tells us much about the Cadbury family and its moral impulse regarding their employees. But much less attention has been given to the written work of Cadbury, and what he was saying, as well as doing, about the world of work. Although his written work is relatively brief and modest, it contains within it the germ of the ideas that found their way into the practices that emerged in the Cadbury company.

Where then, might Cadbury 'fit' within the three dimensions or 'frames of reference'? First, some description of these three dimensions and what they represent. Unitarists see the interests of employers and employees as being broadly similar. As such, they see harmony and co-operation in the workplace as being the norm. Any drift in the direction of ill-feeling, animosity or straightforward conflict in the workplace is seen as a failure in the relationship between the employer and employee. Some might even view it as pathological behaviour, but other explanations include blaming trade union agitators and militants.

Pluralists, on the other hand, see relationships in the workplace as being more complex than the simplistic approach of the unitarists. Whilst they recognise, along with the unitarists, similar objectives, e.g. the success of the company, which brings about

security and the potential for improved pay and conditions for the employees, and for the employer an increase in profitability, there are also conflicts of interest in the workplace, and these have to be managed. Employees will always pursue better pay and conditions, and this will inevitably place pressure on levels of profitability, particularly in lean times. But these tensions tend not to deter the pluralists, who see the value in setting up mechanisms to resolve conflict. Examples would include collective bargaining arrangements and, more recently, Works Councils (Ackers, 2010). Both would provide the necessary forums to help employer and employee discuss their respective claims, and negotiate their way towards an agreement.

We noted above that Fox developed a form of 'radical' pluralism (1974), one that went beyond his initial idea of pluralism (1966), instead suggesting there was a significant imbalance in power between Labour and Capital in the workplace and beyond. To a large extent Labour were unaware of this imbalance, because they had effectively been socialised into accepting the beliefs, assumptions and institutions of those in power, and accepted these as the conventions of the time. Hence there was no likelihood of these relationships being contested in any real or significant way, and, as Fox, noted, "conditioning and power combine..... to produce acceptance and submission" (Fox, 1974, p. 285). For Fox, the only way in which high-trust relations can be secured in the workplace, is for the structural inequalities that exist in the wider society be addressed first.

The third perspective is that of the critical or radical approach. Radicals emphasise that capitalist and workers have fundamentally antagonistic interests because workers are 'exploited' through the extraction of unpaid 'surplus labour'. Unlike pluralists, who see the negotiation of formal rules by the parties as important in achieving compromise around shared goals, radicals view conflict in the workplace as endemic to capitalism and see workers' *real* class interests residing in the overthrow of capitalist social relations and workers control of the means of production. Within this tradition, the orthodox Marxist approach would see worker involvement or participation as examples of class collaboration or pseudo participation. There is another critique provided by a critical management stance, but its conclusions are not radically different from that of the Marxist, emphasising exploitation, de-skilling and general degradation (Alvesson and Willmott, 2011).

Given this threefold typology, Cadbury was instinctively a pluralist. He was always enthusiastic about employees joining the appropriate trade union, and using their organisation to promote their interests. But Cadbury also had to confront the situation he found himself in at the Bournville plant. Despite encouraging and supporting employees to join a trade union, particularly women, he found that because the Cadbury company paid above the industry rate, and the conditions in the workplace were above those to be found in similar working environments, there was a marked reluctance to join trade unions amongst some employees. Because of this, and in order to make sense of what was happening at Bournville, it is helpful to draw upon the 'management style' approach of Fox

(1974), and Purcell and Sissons (1983). They differentiate between 'sophisticated modern (constitutionalist)' – those who engage with trade unions through recognised forms of collective bargaining – and 'sophisticated modern (consultative)' – those who recognise trade unions but prefer more consultative forms of engagement. My argument here is that both of these approaches can help us in understanding why Edward Cadbury was the forerunner or precursor of these approaches. As much of the Cadbury approach was designed to provide a voice for employees within the workplace, when I review Cadbury's written work, I will also make reference to more recent commentary on employee participation in the workplace.

***Women's Work and Wages* (1906)**

As already mentioned, Edward Cadbury jointly wrote his first book with George Shann, a colleague and friend, and M Cecile Matheson, who ran the Birmingham Settlement. As the title suggests, it was a piece of research that looked primarily at women's work and the wages they received for that work. But the research also considered the domestic lives of those women, and focussed its attention on the city of Birmingham. It was a very detailed piece of social research, but remains comparatively neglected. C F G Masterman, when reviewing *Women's Work and* Wages in 1906, provides us with a flavour of the book:

> ...a study, fascinating if sombre, crowded with human interest, the result of a laborious investigation, for which all social reformers will be grateful to the authors (Masterman, 1906, p. 367)

This suggests a more detailed review of the book is long overdue. *Women's Work and Wages* was clearly written to encourage and support social reform. For that reason, its principal audience would have been politicians and the media. Although unlikely to appeal to the everyday reader – too full of facts and detail – it is an easy read, if somewhat dry. The overall aim of the research was to systematise the limited work that had already been done in the area, but to then go further with a series of four specific objectives, already referred to earlier in the biography of Cadbury:

1. To give a complete survey of the conditions under which women are earning a livelihood
2. To provide some definite standard of comparison so that future investigators may be able to ascertain what progress has been made
3. To ascertain to what extent the present industrial and social conditions are helping forward or retarding the physical, mental and moral condition of the workforce
4. To indicate upon what lines they think reformers will obtain the best results in their attempts to raise and brighten the lives of those who are the future mothers of our race

The opening chapter is a review of the nineteenth century legislation introduced by a range of governments to help and support workers. A clear indication of the kind of working environment working women were encountering at the beginning of the twentieth century, and how it had come about, was an important background to the story Cadbury and his colleagues sought to tell. But the book does more than that. The Cadbury family were a Liberal Party supporting family, as were most Quakers at the time, but for much of the nineteenth century the Liberals (Whigs) were a quite different Party to the Liberal Democrats we encounter today. Throughout the nineteenth century the Whigs were the free market Party, with the Tories being the Party of the landed aristocracy and patrician gentry. It was the Tories that were responsible for many of the Factory Acts of the nineteenth century, not the Whigs (Harrison and Hutchins, 2013). This meant that Quaker businesses tended to be run along free-market principles, with the result that conditions in their factories were often similar to those of other factory owners. Personal relationships were kindly, as was the Quaker way, but hard work, discipline and a severe life style were also representative of the Quaker way, and this would have been standard Quaker business practice. By the standards of the day, Cadbury was seen as an attractive company to work for. This is confirmed by the fact that they never had any problem recruiting staff. The available evidence suggests the Cadbury family were keen reformers, but were also disciplined and hard working.

Although the book is comparatively neglected today, it was not so at the time. An American version of the book was published by the University of Chicago Press in 1907, and the book was reviewed with some praise by S P Breckinridge in the *American Journal of Sociology*:

> In the absence of accurate information so painfully felt as to the employment of women in our own communities, a well-planned and well-executed study as to their employment in another great commercial and industrial center [Birmingham] brings with it the possibility of great value, both in the aid it will give in formulating the problem that presents itself on this side the water, and in the body of accurately ascertained facts which will furnish a basis for intelligent comparison. The plan of the present study has been well worked out.....(Breckenridge, 1907, pp. 411-412).

The first piece of legislation reviewed in the book, was that of 1802, which aimed at the preservation of the health and morals of apprentices. This was then followed by reference to a range of workplace legislation introduced throughout the nineteenth century, ending with the Factories and Workshop Act of 1901, which consolidated legislation relating to factories and workshops over this period. This meant that not only were the conditions of the employment of women and children regulated by law, but the regulations also extended in many ways to the employment of men (Cadbury, Shann and Matheson, 1906, p.20). Needless to say, conditions for women and children in the factories of the nineteenth century were dreadful by the standards of today, and the legislation passed only acted to ameliorate conditions, rather than substantially improve them (Engels, 1987).

The 1862 Royal Commission provided the example of a factory girl whose work began at 8am and didn't finish until 11pm or midnight. This kind of arrangement could last for months at a time, dependant on the demands of production, and this particular girl began working in this company and in these conditions at the age of 11. But, to be fair, this was exceptional, and these conditions were not typical of Birmingham. For example, the button manufacturer, Manton, introduced improved measures ahead of the 1867 Factory Act, and reported that it had been beneficial to their organisation and their workers (Cadbury, Shann and Matheson, 1906, pp. 33-4). This was a good example where better working conditions and shorter working hours could prove beneficial to both employer and employee. Overtime was another topical issue, and employers and employees were beginning to recognise that in the long term, it did not pay. J Ramsay MacDonald, the future leader of the Labour Party, when writing of the printing trades said:

> Loss of overtime is not necessarily a loss of work, but a redistribution (and an economical one, too) of the times at which work is done, and does not therefore mean a loss of income, but a steadying and regulation of income (quoted in Cadbury, Shann and Matheson, 1906, p. 38).

One of the issues raised of particular concern was the influence legislation might have on men and their work. In the view of many men, including male trade unionists, legislation was likely to result in men being displaced in the workplace, with their work being done by women. This was not a straightforward issue to deal with, as in some instances women had definitely replaced men, usually at a reduced rate of pay. But the research by Cadbury and his colleagues enabled them to counter a number of the claims. For example, the evidence suggested that, for the most part, men and women did different types of work, so displacement was unlikely in such instances. Another example was where work was of an arduous and physical nature, and only to be taken up by men. Other work might require nimble finger work, and unlikely to appeal to men. Whilst today questions of equality might interfere with this sort of reasoning, this was much less the case in the early twentieth century. These issues of self-selection seemed simple decisions at the time. Another, similar question, concerned marriage. Once married, few women expected to continue in paid employment. On those rare occasions when it did occur, it tended to be part-time work. This kind of attitude and belief only began to change a decade later, when women, including married women, were called upon to work in the factories and fields and play their full part in the War effort.

Cadbury and his colleagues recognised the important role that legislation had played in improving the lot of women and youths in the workplace. So much so, that part of their proposals included further legislation. Breckenridge, in her review of the book, concurred with this sentiment, suggesting legislation showed "the extent to which English common-sense approves public control over the conditions under which the future mothers of the country shall be employed" (Breckenridge, 1907, p. 412). But the suggestion of further legislation was mainly reserved for the final section of the book. Much more remained to

be said about the detail of women's work. Seventy-five pages of the book are devoted to the detailed descriptions of women working in the various trades and industries. Sections described included metalworking, jewellery, leather, clothing, paper, printing, food, tobacco, and wood. Much detailed and interesting information is also included on the manufacturing processes of the time. Before touching on some of those processes, and the impact such processes had on women in the workplace, some note should be taken of how status-conscious some women could be within and between trades and industries. For example, a woman's social class, something ascribed rather than achieved, was the key influence on her choice of trade (Cadbury, Shann and Matheson, p. 48). A working class woman might aspire to a 'respectable' position, like that of a warehouse worker, but the competition from many such girls of similar circumstances acted to depress wages, and so they made little headway with their aspirations. A strong moral tone in the book is maintained throughout, and can best be illustrated by the section on dressmaking. In this section, as well as elsewhere, the authors make it clear that customers have their part to play in helping to improve the pay and conditions of women workers. At this time, there were nearly 7000 milliners and dressmakers in Birmingham, of which about 12% or 750 were employers:

> As far as women are concerned, probably more dressmakers are fined for breaches of the Factory Act than any other class of employer. The public who are so anxious to see girls working under ideal conditions would do well to bear this in mind. The dressmaker may be guilty of want of organisation, greed or inhumanity, but the root of the difficulty lies with the customers who order their things at the last moment. We are too thoughtless in our purchasing, and this applies with special force to dressmaking, where customer and producer are in such close contact. (Cadbury, Shann and Matheson, 1906, p. 103)

Customers were obviously in close contact with producers in such circumstances, and needed to be more conscious of the terms and conditions such workers experienced. Another example would be that of shop assistants, where 70 hours of work a week was commonplace. The shop assistant was a very public face, and improving the lot of shop assistants needed the co-operation of the public to improve matters. To be fair, organisations like the co-operative societies proved to be better and more benevolent employers, but they remained a minor segment of the retail sector.

In a review of the book in 1907 for the *Journal of Political Economy*, Edith Abbott noted:

> Special attention is given throughout the discussion to hygienic conditions and to the question of training or skill.....it is astonishing to find that there are still factories in the metal-working trades "where no facilities for washing are provided, and the girls have to go through the streets looking quite black from the fine powdery dust" (Abbott, 1907, p. 564).

This American review seems to suggest there is already a growing disparity between the quality of working life in the USA as compared to Britain, yet this is countered by Florence Kelley of the American Consumers League. In another review that admires *Women's Work and Wages*, this time for the *Political Science Quarterly*, Kelley explains that the industrial conditions in Birmingham indicate that the legal protection afforded British women workers engaged in the manufacturing trades "is approximately a half-century in advance of that enjoyed by women in similar occupations in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago" (Kelley, 1907, p. 176). Although Abbott goes on to praise the book, she also raised some concerns about the classification systems used by Cadbury, Matheson and Shann, suggesting the definitions could have been more clearly delineated. The point is well made as differentiating between 'healthy' and 'fairly healthy', or 'well cared for' and 'fairly well cared for', would be difficult to quantify. Even so, Abbott remained impressed with the book, suggesting it was interesting and provided the "public with a thoroughly readable account of an important social problem" (Abbott, 1907, p. 564).

The most difficult question to be answered was the differentiation in pay between men and women. Women were always paid less than men, even when they did the same work, or work of a similar standing. The usual reasons given for this were that women were there only for 'pin' money. This, it was argued, was because they were subsidised by their family when young, and would eventually marry. Marrying, of course, would not absolve them of this penalty of less pay. For once they were married, they would be subsidised by their husbands. Even more obtuse arguments were proffered to defend the differential. Economists were fond of arguing that labour as a whole had a fair share of the national dividend. In other words, the returns for labour and capital were about right, and to give women more money would effectively mean men would have to receive less. This was an argument that was persuasive, because few men disagreed with it. But worse still, trade unions, the very organisations that should have argued against it, tended to side with this argument (and the interests of their primarily male membership) too. Indeed, some trade unions refused even to have female members. The Amalgamated Engineering Union did not accept women members until 1943. Although there were some trade unionists who took a more radical stand, siding with the women, they remained small in number. For example, even Marxists and syndicalists like John Maclean and Tom Mann, who argued strongly for a greater share of the national dividend for labour, were not notable in their support for women.

Perhaps the best, and certainly the most substantial review of the book, was to be found in the *Economic Review* of July 1907. J St G Heath begins by turning to the chapter on 'Women's Wages':

> The authors prove unmistakably that in Birmingham the wages of women over eighteen years of age move near ten shillings a week, while the wages for unskilled men average from eighteen shillings to a pound at least. They show clearly that these low wages are not due to married women crowding into the trades in order to

> earn pocket-money, and so making the struggle harder for the bread-winner. On the contrary, the average wage for married women works out from sixpence to a shilling higher than that for unmarried women (Heath, 1907, p. 379).

Of course, the whole idea of what constituted a fair share for labour was contentious, and disputed by many in the workplace. Cadbury and his fellow authors certainly contested the idea that a fair share was given to labour. Their view was that a fairer share for labour would result in an improvement for women. Indeed, they went further, producing evidence to support the view that good wages also meant good business from the employer's point of view. This was a consistent argument throughout the book, and although Cadbury was too modest to use the Cadbury company as an example, it would have been obvious to all who read the book and had an interest in business affairs.

A particular blight on the work of women was 'outwork'. The Cadbury family owned the *Daily News*, and used it to promote and support the sorts of causes that were associated with welfare in the workplace. As already noted, one such cause was that of the sweated trades. The *Daily News* held a sweated trades exhibition in the Queen's Hall, London, to highlight such work and the miseries it created. The exhibition *Handbook* is covered comprehensively in part (b) of this section, but for now we can note the exhibition featured 'outwork' trades very prominently, and they were covered to a degree in this book. The principal unskilled outwork industry in Birmingham was the carding of hooks and eyes. The workers earned between 9d and 1s 4d per pack, each pack consisting of a gross of cards with two dozen hooks and eyes on each, with the workers having to provide their own needles and cotton! If we were to look for a comment that represented the feelings of the authors on these matters, the following paragraph goes some way towards expressing their views:

> How then does the present system of payment affect women? There is first a waste of nerve and spirit, a continual temptation to over-work in order to maintain a standard that ought to be maintained, and hence much ill-health and early deterioration of physique; lower in the scale we find an acquiescence in conditions which are, to say the least, not conducive to progress; and lower still there is no possibility of escape from actual physical deterioration. It is not a hopeful prospect for the mothers of the coming generation!
> (Cadbury, Shann and Matheson, 1906, p. 193)

Shann, one of the authors of the book, and a close colleague of Edward Cadbury, had become the Secretary of the Anti-Sweating League, a body that had been formed in 1906. At another conference on the sweated trades, this time organised by the Anti-Sweating League, a range of luminaries of the Labour movement were delegates, including Clementine Black, Mary Macarthur, Gertrude Tuckwell, Ben Tillett, J R Clynes, Philip Snowden and Sidney Webb. This three-day conference was another example of the pressures that were being placed upon the new Liberal government to bring about a minimum wage (Hutchins, 1907). Although the authors appear committed to, at least in

part, a state-promoted solution to the issue of welfare in the workplace, they did not appear too convinced that the current generation of politicians would bring this about.

Further chapters in the book entitled 'Life in the Factory' and 'Rules and Discipline' include more detailed information for employers of a mind to improve conditions in the factory. Emphasis is placed upon the careful balance to be achieved between efficiency and economy in the workplace, and the direct link this has with the happiness and welfare of the employees. For the authors, good welfare in the workplace almost inevitably led to happy and healthy employees. This view was to be confirmed by later research in the field (Proud, 1916, Kelly, 1925). Having identified many of the problems with women's work and their wages, Cadbury and his fellow authors are not short on solutions. The early chapters in the book highlighting the problems, lead naturally to a range of measures that the authors felt would at least ameliorate the problems women experienced in the workplace. First among these measures would have been relatively simple to implement: a more thorough and efficient administration of the laws currently in existence. This could be achieved quite quickly, by expanding considerably the number of women factory inspectors. Alongside this, employers needed to adopt a more extensive range of welfare measures, including canteens, cloakrooms and lavatories, first aid and general health measures, health and safety matters like appropriate heating, lighting and ventilation, protective clothing, and suitable training. But the main suggestion was the need for a national minimum wage. In this period there was discussion on the nature of a minimum wage, and the Trades Board Act of 1909 which introduced a minimum wage in a range of 'sweated' trades, was only a few years away. An appendix in the book outlines a Wages Boards Bill, promoted by the Liberal MP, Sir Charles Dilke. A version of this Bill effectively formed the basis of the Trades Board Act when it was eventually passed. But despite much discussion and promotion of a minimum wage, there remained widespread opposition. Employers and the Conservative Party were the main opponents, but not the only ones. Trade unions should have been enthusiastic supporters, but rarely were. In this period they remained predominantly male organisations, and fearful that any promotion of the case for women would result in a lessening of their case. Constraints on pay and working conditions were seen as the inevitable outcome of supporting improved working arrangements for women.

Some credit was given to the conscientious public, who were prepared to restrict their purchases to goods and articles that were not produced by 'sweated' labour. But this was a fringe activity, not least because many sections of the public were poor, and were forced down the road of buying the cheaper 'sweated' products. Even so, the authors recognised the co-operative societies as a good example of this more conscientious approach. Set up by people to provide quality goods and services at a fair price, ensuring at the same time that employees were treated decently and fairly. Customers often felt an integral part of the organisation, not least through their membership. Yet, as the authors remind us, the co-operative movement remained too small to have a significant impact. The way forward, the authors believed, was for a more interventionist state. The minimum

wage remained the article of faith, but a bold range of measures designed to bring about real reform was needed. In many ways, the ideas suggested in the book were forerunners of the workplace measures introduced by the radical and reforming Liberal governments of 1906-15. These measures included old age pensions in 1908, then the Trade Boards Act of 1909, which catered for minimum levels of pay in the low-paid 'sweated' trades, followed by the Labour Exchanges Act of 1909, and then the National Insurance Act of 1911 introducing the beginnings of health and unemployment insurance.

Although the book highlighted much that was wrong with workplace Britain, it was not short on a sense of hope. This was revealed in the sorts of ideas and practices mentioned in the concluding chapters of the book. It was not a naive kind of hope, but one well-grounded in evidence in a book brimming with empirical detail. Even so, a good indication of the general temper of the book and its message can be gleaned from its concluding statement. The full quotation is lengthy, but it does provide an overall sense of the authors' conclusions, suggesting a move in the direction of 'wise collectivism' was the way forward:

> ....and the trend of things seems to indicate that the hope of the future lies in a wise collectivism. The line of progress is suggested by the increase of voluntary co-operative undertakings on the part of the workers, and by the enormous development of municipal enterprise.

Here we are immediately drawn to the words 'wise collectivism', which they go on to tell us refers to 'voluntary co-operative undertakings' by workers, and the important role of 'municipal enterprise'. Cadbury was always keen to ensure workers took responsibility on themselves for making improvements to their circumstances in the workplace. He was not of the view that everything should be done or provided for the worker, but rather they should be provided with the means to do this for themselves. This might involve employers, governments or both providing the initial input, but then it was up to workers in the workplace, or citizens in the case of municipal authorities, to set about addressing their own problems. This is another indication of Cadbury's reluctance to assume the mantle of 'paternalist'. The passage continues:

> As private enterprise fails to provide those common services that the community needs, the people in their collective capacity are taking the task upon themselves. There is a new idea behind the imperial and local government activity. The community is collectively becoming more and more responsible for the health, education and life of the individual, and he would be a daring man who attempted to fix the limits to the practical development of this new social ideal.

The authors are here demonstrating faith in the working class and their ability to resolve many of their own problems. However, there is also a critique contained within the final concluding comments, which suggests the economic system is at fault, and that more needs to be done:

> What the people collectively need, that they should collectively hold and use. The present system of production for profit is wasteful: our nation, in spite of its increasing wealth, is cursed by poverty widespread, and the only way to mitigate the terrible results of the present inequalities of wealth and opportunity is through a social and industrial policy having for its end and aim a better and more equable distribution.

We should perhaps note here Cadbury's final sentence, suggesting there should be something of a significant shift in the social and economic arrangements of the day. In other words, the broader inequalities that prevailed in society needed to be re-balanced through a fundamental change in the economic relationships that existed. This moves Cadbury beyond the neo-pluralism I suggest, and indicates he held a variety of views, not always consistent. Even so, he still fits within the more radical elements of Liberal thinking of the time. Even an establishment figure like A V Dicey, acknowledged the fact that legislative collectivism had largely replaced Liberal individualism in the period since 1870 (Dicey, 1914).

Finally, Cadbury is not unaware of his privileged position, and makes this clear in the final sentence of this passage, demonstrating a sense of Christian duty or moral obligation that goes beyond providing merely a helping hand:

> The fortunate ones amongst us can hardly be content to share in the refined, cultured and even luxurious life of the comfortable and richer classes, when we remember that this enjoyment by the few means, at the present time, that millions of people are doomed from their birth to hard and monotonous work in order to provide the comfort, culture, luxury and refinement in which they themselves never share (Cadbury, Shann and Matheson, 1906, pp. 305-6).

What might we draw from this book and its general conclusions? Are there any pointers we might elicit that could form the beginnings of an approach to industrial relations? I have earlier suggested that Cadbury's approach fits within a broad pluralist framework, but it is a pluralism that incorporates many of the more recent amendments to pluralism, as suggested in the earlier Cullinane quote (p. 2), rather than the original version outlined by Fox in his research paper for the Donovan Commission (Fox, 1966). By the early decades of the twentieth century Cadbury was already introducing a form of pluralism that more clearly resonated with the Cullinane definition. Interestingly, this vision of pluralism in its wider context may be coming back in fashion. In Britain, the ex-Labour MP and academic David Marquand has been making recent noises (2015), and in the US Michael Lind's recent text is again promoting the idea of strong trade unions as one of the central 'countervailing powers' in society (2020). The most committed advocate in Britain for powerful trade unions is The Institute of Employment Rights, which began with its *Manifesto* in 2016, but has recently added *Rolling out the Manifesto for Labour Law* (2018), as a guide to the Manifesto's implementation, and even more recently *Guide to a Progressive Industrial*

Relations Bill (2019). Throughout *Women's Work and Wages*, Cadbury is emphasising the importance of legislation that covers workers and the workplace. Then, in his concluding chapter, he suggests first that there is a need to enforce the factory legislation that already exists. Clearly there is no point in having factory legislation, if it is not adequately enforced. Hence Cadbury's support for more factory inspectors and a widening of their mandate. Alongside this, and of critical importance to women workers, was legislation to introduce a minimum wage. Cadbury had been heavily involved in the national campaign to bring this about, and played a not inconsiderable part in achieving this. He used Rowntree's analysis of poverty in York (which in 1901 suggested the minimum wage needed to support a family of five was 21s. 8d) to identify what he considered to be a minimum wage in Birmingham, but at the same time wanted more:

> In Birmingham, taking the actual life of a working-class family, which includes a certain amount of sick and funeral payments, and higher rents, and also remembering that often a family consists of more than five persons, 25s per week can hardly suffice for providing efficient conditions, even taking for granted the low standard of comfort of working-class life.
> (Cadbury, Matheson and Shann, 1906, p. 217)

This support for more than the minimum wage was typical of Cadbury, and something that he was prepared to do something about. Not only was his support for a living wage channelled through helping to bring about the necessary legislation, he also ensured levels of pay in the family company were above those minimum rates.

Trade unions were another central means of improving pay and conditions in the workplace, and, once again, Cadbury was firm in his support. Within the traditional pluralist framework, trade unions are seen as an important 'countervailing power' within the workplace, and one that was an essential balancing component to the power, particularly economic power, of the employer. Cadbury's support was enthusiastic and wide-ranging, although he probably thought of this as more 'wise collectivism' rather than a power relationship within the workplace. I have already made references to his support for trade unionists in the form of the striking Cradley Heath women chain makers, support for Julia Varley, who he brought to Bournville to organise the women workers employed by Cadbury, and support for the Bournville Social Service League, the women workers at Bournville who set about helping to organise women workers in Birmingham into trade unions. These ideas situate Cadbury firmly in the pluralist 'camp', and his further written and practical work, as for example outlined in the next section on the *Daily News* sweated industries exhibition, consolidate this view.

Before moving on to the Sweated Industries Exhibition *Handbook*, now would be an appropriate time to consider another Rowlinson paper, where he reviews a book by James Walvin, *The Quakers: Money and Morals* (1997), and which forms a central strand of his critique. Rowlinson uses the review to re-examine the history of Quaker employers

(Rowlinson, 1998). For his part, Walvin looks at the part played by Quaker employers in the period from their beginnings in the middle of the seventeenth century to the early years of the twentieth century. In particular, he uses chapter ten on 'Chocolate' to make use of his detailed knowledge of Cadbury. Once again, Rowlinson repeats a similar point he had raised in his first paper, namely that 'the Quaker conscience' was immaterial. Instead, he suggests it was more akin to a constructed narrative, or 'historiography', one used to explain the company's success in terms of adopting certain 'enlightened 'employment practices, the motivation for which lay elsewhere and which were not as enlightened as presented:

> The impression that the Quaker conscience exercised a consistent and benign influence on the behaviour of Quaker employers is open to challenge. Although it must be acknowledged that during the twentieth century Quakers have enjoyed a reputation as enlightened employers, it is difficult to reconcile this image with glaring inconsistencies in their history……it can be argued that the image of the Quakers as enlightened employers is of relatively recent origin. The introduction of industrial welfare by prominent Quaker firms, especially Cadbury and Rowntree, allowed them to develop a distinctive identity that drew on their heritage……..Under the influence of these prominent firms a historiography developed which attributes the Quakers success in business to their enlightened employment practices. (Rowlinson, 1998, pp. 164-5)

Rowlinson also notes that Walvin sees Cadbury as 'the real pioneer' among Quaker companies, but quickly goes on to refer to developments overseas:

> But the source for many of the organizational innovations at Cadbury can be traced to the influence of the new factory system in the United States and other social movements (which are overlooked by Walvin), rather than to the Quaker conscience. (Rowlinson, 1998, p. 178)

For the remainder of the section that makes maximum use of the Cadbury material, Rowlinson suggests that it is the *business effectiveness* of industrial welfare that persuades Cadbury to introduce welfare and the more modern personnel management techniques, not the Quaker conscience. It is no doubt the case that Cadbury would have been aware of newer developments in some US companies, and that such techniques and efficiencies were important considerations for the Cadbury company. But Rowlinson ignores the possibility that the techniques and measures introduced at Cadbury were an outcome of the type of Quakerism that had emerged in Britain during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Indeed, the investigations Cadbury undertook for the *Women's Work and Wages* research suggest that his mind was fertile when it came to new initiatives. It might be fairer to say that both Quakerism and external US influences were at play, but Rowlinson seems more intent on rejecting the influence of Quakerism as marginal at best. Indeed, if we consider the US developments further, we also have to conclude that Cadbury was totally averse to the kind of 'welfare capitalism' typical of US companies. Those companies usually introduced welfare into their workplaces to specifically *exclude* trade unions. As we have

seen from Cadbury's early research, he was an enthusiastic advocate of trade union membership, as well as state intervention, where necessary. The concluding comments Cadbury made in the book should dispel any idea that he would have used welfare for such purposes: "....and the trend of things seems to indicate that the hope of the future lies in a wise collectivism"....."As private enterprise fails to provide those common services that the community needs, the people in their collective capacity are taking the task upon themselves"....."What the people collectively need, that they should collectively hold and use. The present system of production for profit is wasteful....."(Cadbury, Matheson and Shann, 1906, pp. 305-6). Hardly the sentiments of US employers at this time!

Rowlinson seems to have a picture of Quakerism that is somewhat dated, perhaps still seeing Quakers as a rather 'other worldly' group of people, remaining resistant to the ways of the modern world. But, as has been noted earlier in the thesis, this is a mistaken understanding. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a flowering of Quaker engagement with modern thought. A more critical approach to the Bible emerged, along with a more liberal theology. This, more liberal theology, was the Quakerism that Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury family came to embrace. It can be found in their willingness to search for 'that of God in everyone'. An experiential approach to the workplace was enthusiastically encouraged, resulting in a company that was prepared to experiment and innovate in production processes, as well as in the way staff were managed and developed. Works Councils and other forms of employee participation (discussed below in section three) would be good examples. And their concern for the wider community was demonstrated by their development of the Bournville village for employees and others, as well as the wider range of donations and gifts to Birmingham and the surrounding West Midlands conurbation.

Rowlinson makes a point of contesting Walvin's suggestion that the employment schemes devised by Cadbury, and other chocolate manufacturers like Fry and Rowntree, were a direct result of their Quakerism. To support his contention, he quotes the sympathetic biography of George Cadbury by A G Gardiner (a former editor of the Cadbury owned *Daily News*):

> He did not inherit a business previously well established. He created it, and it was his deliberate conviction that the welfare policy so far from hindering the development of the firm assisted it. He based this belief, not upon the inner light or the sanctions of religion, but upon plain reasoning from cause to effect. (quoted in Rowlinson, 1998, p.180)

There is no doubt that the welfare policies added to the success of the company, but to imply they were the only driver is wrong. Also, Gardiner is wrong to say this had nothing to do with faith because an important tenet of Quaker belief is that there is no separation of the secular from the sacred. For Quakers, every day and all of life is a sacred journey. Quakers, throughout their history, have tried to understand and follow what they consider

to be the 'Inward Light'. This is a long-standing belief, and one to which Quakers maintain fidelity. Although Quakers, being human, fall down in their witness, it still remains an essential element of their testimony to 'truth'. Further examples of the Quaker approach to labour relations will be identified in the next piece of written work, which is a good example of the Cadbury family putting time, effort and money into bringing about better pay and conditions for those who really were at the bottom of the pile – the sweated workers.

***Handbook of the 'Daily News' Sweated Industries Exhibition* (1906)**

Although the *Handbook of the Daily News Sweated Industries Exhibition* was not written by Edward Cadbury, it will remain forever associated with the Cadbury family. The *Daily News* was a newspaper owned by the Cadbury family, and the exhibition was organised and sponsored by the newspaper. It took place between 3rd and 29th May, 1906, and was designed to highlight the plight of the 'sweated' worker. Much attention had been given to the notion of the sweated worker from the late nineteenth century, but there had been a particular outpouring of comment in the early twentieth century. Well-known names had written and spoken on the subject, including George Lansbury and Ramsay Macdonald, future leaders of the Labour Party, Mary Macarthur and Gertrude Tuckwell, well-known trade unionists of the day, and the writer George Bernard Shaw. Clearly Edward Cadbury was not alone in promoting improvements for the sweated trades, but he was unusual in being a high-profile employer willing to campaign in the vanguard of this struggle. His support for the sweated worker was wide-ranging and impressive.

The exhibition had a Council that effectively organised the event, and numbered among its members many well-known names of the day. Aside from some of the names mentioned above, members of the Council included the writers Robert Blatchford and H G Wells, the politicians Keir Hardie and Percy Alden, trade unionist Clementina Black, and the editor of the *Daily News*, A G Gardiner, who was the Chairman of the Executive Committee. Edward Cadbury and his colleague and fellow-author, George Shann, were also members of the Council. The event took place at the Queens Hall, London, and attracted nearly 30,000 visitors. The first edition of the accompanying handbook sold out its 5000 copies in the first 10 days (Mudie-Smith, 1906, p. 4). A helpful picture of the scene is provided by the following description:

> Queens Hall is reached through a fashionable shopping district of London, and the streets are full of carriages, cabs and finely dressed men and women. A considerable number of the latter find their way to the exhibition, there to see some twenty odd stalls, each illustrating in a practical way the various processes of home industries or outwork, and emphasised by figures and facts given in the catalogue.
> (*BWM*, June, 1906, p. 273)

In fact, the idea for the 'Sweating' exhibition had originated in Germany. An exhibition as such had taken place in Berlin in March 1904. The idea was picked up by Reverend J. E. Watts-Ditchfield, the vicar of St James-the-Less, Bethnal Green, who held a similar

exhibition of sweated labour to be found in his parish in May 1904. The *Daily News* exhibition followed the approach adopted by the Reverend Watts-Ditchfield, in that not only the sweated goods were on show but also the actual processes of making the goods. This was a sensible decision, and left a great impression on the visitors. The 'introductory note' to the *Handbook* identified the specific purpose of the exhibition:

> Our aims are to acquaint the public with the evils of sweating, and to cultivate an opinion which shall compel legislation that will mitigate, if not entirely remove those evils.....Sweating follows unrestricted competition.....Competition is selfishness, naked and unashamed, and it loses nothing of its ugliness or balefulness by being organised. So long as we are working with a vicious principle, no individual kindliness on the part of the employer is, or can be, sufficient to prevent cruelty and injustice.
> (Mudie-Smith, 1906, p. 10)

There was an acknowledgement that the exhibition itself could only play a part in bringing about change, but, of itself, it did make a considerable impact, and generated much publicity for the overall cause. This was in no small part due to the exposure of the manufacturing processes employed by the sweated trades. Dozens of such trades were demonstrated at the exhibition, and they were well described in the handbook too.

Gertrude Tuckwell, Chair of the Trade Union League, wrote the preface to the *Handbook*, and spoke for all when she said:

> The object of the Exhibition.....is to marshal a considerable number of instances of the rates of pay, and so far as possible, of the conditions of labour in the lowest ranks of various trades, and to confront the public with them, so that an effect may be produced which will not be transitory, and will lead to the serious consideration of remedies which will be permanent and which shall embrace not only individuals, but the whole of sweated labour.
> (Mudie-Smith, 1906, pp. 12-13)

This kind of attitude and approach was shared by all involved in organising the exhibition, and situates the thinking behind it squarely within what would now be termed the pluralist tradition. But it would be one of the more recent variations of pluralism. Whereas the standard position, explained by Clegg (1975), emphasised the central role of collective bargaining in a reasonably mature industrial relations climate, the approach of Tuckwell, and certainly one shared by Edward Cadbury, addressed the state too. Indeed, Cadbury made good use of the approach in his text, Sweating (1906), where he promoted the idea of government intervention to bring about an end to the 'sweated' trades by legislating for a minimum (preferably 'living') wage. Public policy is identified as a central platform in bringing about change and innovation. Tuckwell herself goes further, and refers to the state of Victoria, Australia, and the system they had recently introduced:

> By this plan, a Committee of Employers and Employed in a given trade is officially called into existence; its members meet and thresh out their trade difficulties and decide on a given rate of pay, subject to a revision subject to the changes of the market. The last report of the Victorian Chief Inspector is well worth attention. From it we find that there are thirty eight Boards at present in operation, and that these determine rates of pay in such industries, among others, as those which represent our sweated trades, i.e. clothing, underclothing, dressmaking, shirt-making, fruit preserving.
> (Mudie-Smith, 1906, p. 16)

Tuckwell was not alone in raising the issue of the approach adopted in Australia and New Zealand. Chiozza-Money, the Liberal M.P., also made similar points in his article on 'Legislation and the Sweater' in the same *Handbook* (p. 26). He went on to suggest that the methods used in Australia and New Zealand would be even more applicable in the sweated trades in Britain, as the situation seemed even more acute.

One of the points that was left unsaid in the *Handbook* is that the examples provided by the Exhibition, however important and exemplary, in many instances only provided a partial understanding of the sheer misery experienced by sweated workers. In a review of the Exhibition for the *The Speaker: the Liberal Review*, the author noted:

> No exhibition, however faithful, can reproduce the milieu which makes these home industries not only a struggle against starvation but a continued outrage upon the decencies of family life, the furniture huddled into a corner to make room for material and machines, the half-finished garments littered across the untidy bed, the pervading odour of glue or paste or india rubber, the unkempt children staggering under enormous bundles to "the governor" (Anon., May, 5, 1906, p. 110).

Another equally important point, and one often overlooked, was the charge that the sweated trades were merely the preserve of the inefficient and unskilled. This can be quickly countered by pointing to a trade like flower-making, which required some considerable artistic skill, but was still condemned to the level of a 'sweated' trade, and consequently very poorly paid.

It should be recalled that the problem of the sweated trades was not new in Britain. In the 1880s the government had appointed a committee of the House of Lords to investigate the sweating system. The committee sat for two years and heard much evidence, helpfully issuing what became the standard definition of the sweating system: "Sweating meant unduly low rates of pay, excessive hours of labour, and insanitary state of workplaces" (Britain, 1890, cxxxiv – cxxxv).

The evidence, which was contained in what is referred to as the 'Blue Books', tended to gather dust. Nevertheless, they did point in the direction of where legislation was needed, and governments had taken tentative steps to improve matters. But much more needed to be done, and the Sweated Industries Exhibition was a vivid illustration. George

Shann, colleague of Edward Cadbury and co-author with Cadbury of *Sweating* (1907) (considered next in this section), provided reports in the handbook of three sweated trades: Hook and Eye Carders, Button Carders and Chain Making. The first two were well-known home working trades in Birmingham, whilst chain making was concentrated in the Cradley Heath area of the Black Country. He refers to hook and eye carding as being chief of the unskilled home trades, but very poorly paid. Such women workers invariably relied on charities and poor law relief to supplement their income, so the lives of these women were inevitably hopeless and miserable. Button carders were suffering a similar plight to that of the hook and eye carders, but their wages were generally better (Mudie- Smith, 1906, pp. 39-40). As regards chain making, Shann reported that girls usually entered the trade at the age of 13 or 14, when they left school. Women's pay was usually less than a third of that of men, and their working day lasted from 7am to 8pm, with breaks for breakfast, tea and dinner. The women almost always worked in a domestic workshop, and their cheapness tended to hinder the introduction of machinery. There had been a trade union for women since 1886, but few women joined, and their pay remained depressed. Although many attended Church, Chapel or Salvation Army citadel, there was little other opportunity for recreation. Their lives were ones of little freedom, change or hope (Mudie-Smith, 1906, pp. 59-60).

The review in the May 5, 1906 edition of *The Speaker: the Liberal Review*, has already been mentioned above, but it is worthwhile noting that whilst the review was generally sympathetic to the plight of the sweated workers, the author appeared to retain a traditional economic orthodoxy in his approach. He is quite clear that 'sweating' is a disease rather than a 'system' (or 'structural' issue). For example, he suggests, sweating may be produced by a retailer setting the price of a product well above the cost of producing it; in another instance the sub-contractor may be the abuser; in yet a third instance it could be the invasion of a particular trade by 'small masters' with little or no capital, as in the trade of cabinet-making (Anon., May, 5, 1906, p. 110). He does appear to acknowledge the value of wage boards, but with some resignation. Edward Cadbury would have disagreed with all of this. Indeed, it is just possible that the less than enthusiastic support in some quarters led Cadbury to collaborate with his colleague, George Shann, in producing the directly political tract, *Sweating*. Other reviewers made interesting comments on the exhibition too.

The Manchester Guardian reported on the "salutary object-lesson" of "our sweated industries", praised the work being done by Gertrude Tuckwell, and suggested the *Handbook* produced by R Mudie-Smith needed to reach a wider public than that of the visitors to the exhibition. To a degree this was certainly achieved as another reviewer, Dorothy M. Hunter, reported in the October 13, 1906 edition of *The Speaker: the liberal review*:

> The Nation owes a debt of gratitude to the *Daily News*, whose Exhibition of Sweated Industries in London has now been followed by a similar exhibition in Manchester, once more compelling attention to the shocking conditions under which, in this era

> of wealth and boasted civilisation, we are supplied with many articles of our daily use (Hunter, 1906, p. 44).

Hunter made further comment that was interesting and enlightening in the kinds of ideas and proposals that were coming forward at this time. So, for example, she suggests the state ought to provide some of those in the sweated trades with suitable workplaces and machinery, such as to allow them the continued opportunity to earn a wage, rather than denying them work because the room in which they were working was not fit for purpose. Even worse that they should be unemployed and on parish relief, a form of state support many sweated workers were already receiving. Citing evidence in support of this, she noted French municipalities were already providing public laundries, and the Swiss communes' public dairies. As regards manufacturers, Hunter suggested they pay a percentage on orders given to outworkers in lieu of the savings they made on outlay for buildings and machinery. Nor were the workers themselves removed from some payment. Hunter even suggested they should pay an element towards the cost of the new machinery, as it would result in them earning higher wages.

Clementina Black (1853-1922) was an interesting figure, being an early feminist, socialist and trade unionist. She became a friend of the Marx family, particularly the daughter, Eleanor. She worked consistently for women's rights at work and for women's suffrage. Central to her work was support for working class women and the emerging trade union movement. In 1886, she became honorary secretary of the Women's Trade Union League, moving an equal pay motion at the 1888 Trades Union Congress. The same year she helped form the Women's Trade Union Association, which later became the Women's Industrial Council. By the late 1890s she was already campaigning for a minimum wage, and by the early 1900s was active in the Women's suffrage campaign. She also developed something of a reputation as a novelist, publishing seven in all. One with the title *An Agitator* (1894) was about a socialist strike leader and was lauded by Eleanor Marx as "a realistic account of the British working class movement". But more serious stuff followed, and her two political works were *Sweated Industry and the Minimum Wage* (1907) and *Makers of our Clothes: a Case for Trade Boards* (1909). Both were of course an outgrowth of her article in the *Daily News Handbook*. Clementina Black provided one of the more substantial sections in the *Handbook*. Writing of the 'suggested remedies' for home work of the sweated kind, she first adumbrates what she considers the problems to be: a) excessive hours, b) unsuitability of workplace , c) the employment of child labour, and d) low pay. Although she addressed each of these injustices in turn, the greatest evil in her view was low pay. She saw pay at a subsistence level as being due to the intensity of competition in the sweated trades. She differentiated between free competition and free trade, reminding the reader that free competition could be checked by the fostering of four remedies: a) association and organisation, b) legal enforcement of basic health standards in the workplace, c) a certain level of skill to be attained in certain trades and d) a sense of public duty. It is worthwhile noting these remedies, because they are consistent with the views

and work of Edward Cadbury, were remedies worthy of promotion, and reinforced the tenets of pluralism.

The first of these remedies was organising, and you would expect a woman with the knowledge and experience of Clementina Black to support the idea of organising women into appropriate trade unions. Although she came from a relatively prosperous middle-class family, her mother died whilst caring for her invalid father. Clementina, being the eldest, had to assume responsibility for her seven brothers and sisters as well as her invalid father. This need to care for the rest of her family seemed to invoke in her an empathy for those in trying circumstances, and she took to studying social problems in her available time. This led to her interest in trade unionism, and her early promotion of women in trade unions. On assuming the role of general secretary of the Women's Trade Union League, she was merely the first of other notables in the union, like Gertrude Tuckwell, general secretary in 1892, and President in 1904, and Mary Macarthur, general secretary in 1903. Although the field of women's trade unionism was difficult in this period, experiencing hostility from male employees as well as employers, her work was of considerable benefit. It was no surprise to see her having a special place in the exhibition, contributing the article on 'Suggested Remedies' (p. 22) for the sweated trades, as well as supplying two illustrations, one on 'Racquet and Tennis Ball Covering' (Mudie-Smith, 1906, p. 69) and the other on 'Bible Folding' (Mudie-Smith, 1906, p. 108).

These themes were merely representative of much that was on show at the exhibition, and the *Handbook* provided a good overview of what the exhibition was all about. It is appropriate to end this section with a review of the *Handbook* by B L Hutchins, author of *Women in Modern Industry* (1915). She sums up the main theme of the Exhibition and its promise, and drives home what she considers the central question to be addressed:

> The root of the matter remains the problem of wages. Improvement of sanitation and so forth is, after all, very cold comfort to those whose earnings do not bring them enough to eat, or enable them to clothe and warm themselves. It can hardly be doubted that we shall be at length driven to legislate for the wages in sweated trades. By some means or other the employer or contractor should be made responsible for the payment of piece-rates calculated on the basis of yielding a living wage for the hours as worked in non-textile factories and workshops, and allowance should be made for loss of time in carrying work to and fro. Individual action will never secure this desideratum, in default of the pressure which the corporate community can alone bring to bear.
> (Hutchins, 1906, pp. 340-1)

The Cadbury-owned *Daily News* Sweated Trades Exhibition was designed to draw attention to the iniquities of the sweated trades, as well as provide further empirical evidence of the need for industrial change. This it did with some conviction.

By 1907 Cadbury was clearly fired up enough to produce, along with his socialist colleague, George Shann, a distinctly political attack on the sweating system. He did this by producing a *Handbook* to be used by political activists, *Sweating*.

***Sweating* (1907)**

After *Women's Work and Wages*, Cadbury addressed the theme of 'sweating', an important strain of concern in his previous book. As already noted in the review of the *Handbook of the 'Daily News' Sweated Industries Exhibition*, at this time the sweated trades were one of the most pressing problems around. Trade union and religious leaders were prominent in their efforts to raise the issue with those in authority. *Sweating* (1907) by Edward Cadbury and George Shann was one of a series of handbooks issued under the general editorship of Percy Allen, the Liberal Party M.P. The aim of the series was to present, in a concise form, the salient features of a range of social problems confronting industry and society. In their preface, the authors suggest they have:

> Endeavoured to give, in a brief and analytical form, the facts and theories of sweated industries. Since this book is one of a series intended primarily for working-men the use of technical terms has been avoided as far as possible. At the same time it is hoped that the following statement of the subject may be of value to the student beginning the study of this particular problem.
> (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, Preface)

This preface tells us that the authors had two, quite distinct, audiences. First, it was a handbook for the worker, providing him or her with the necessary information and example to work towards eradicating the system of 'sweating'. In the hands of the organised worker it could be a useful tool in his or her armour. Second, it was an important source of information for the student or researcher, who was committed to overthrowing the evils of the sweated trades. This is well illustrated by the range of reference and citation included in the book. This latter point is also important in pressing home to the reader that this was a serious book on a serious issue. It was not something run off by a well-known employer, keen to be seen in a good light, advocating for 'just causes'.

The book itself begins with a dedication to Edward Cadbury's father, George, acknowledging his work and effort over the years:

> To George Cadbury, an adult school teacher for forty-eight years, in recognition of his efforts to remedy the lot of sweated workers (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, 'Dedication').

The opening chapter begins by noting that 'sweating' lacks a precise meaning. Originally, it had applied to a system of sub-contracting in certain industries, where the middleman forced down the wages of the worker to the lowest level possible. The clothing trade seems to have been a good example of this, and the authors make reference to Kingsley's *Alton*

Locke (1849) and his accompanying essay 'Cheap Clothes and Nasty', as examples of what they meant. It is interesting that on the very first page of the *Handbook* Cadbury draws attention to the works of Charles Kingsley. Kingsley was one of the small group of Christian Socialists that emerged in Britain in the middle to late nineteenth century, who, amongst other things, agitated for improved conditions in the workplace. Although never explicitly a socialist, Cadbury already seems to be affiliating himself with those of a socialist bent, and his co-author, Shann, went on to become a Labour Councillor on Birmingham City Council.

The depth of research in the book was again demonstrated when Cadbury and Shann looked for a more up-to-date and wider definition of sweating, and turned to the Fifth Report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords, appointed to investigate the subject in 1888. As already noted, this Committee produced the description that came to be the standard definition: 1) An unduly low rate of wages, 2) Excessive hours of labour, 3) The insanitary state of the houses in which the work is carried on. It is worth noting too that the House of Lords' Report concluded with the words: "These evils can hardly be exaggerated." (Britain, 1890, p.cxxxv). Unfortunately, nothing of note came of the Lords' report, so campaigners continued to press for changes in industrial conditions. Nevertheless, the involvement of the House of Lords' was a good example of the wide-ranging attention being received by the sweated trades at this point, and Cadbury and Shann acknowledge their debt to their predecessors, by providing something of a review of the work done by others, including the range of Factory Acts passed in the nineteenth century. The names mentioned included Richard Oastler (1789-1861), a Tory radical who campaigned on behalf of the weak and vulnerable, particularly children, and helped achieve the ten hour day for women and those aged between 13 and 18; John Cam Hobhouse (1786-1869), a leading advocate of parliamentary reform and factory legislation, who also investigated the Peterloo Massacre, and was highly critical of the savage way the authorities had dealt with the demonstrators; M T Sadler (1780-1835), another Tory radical who supported the ten hour day, and Lord Shaftesbury (1801-1885), the 7th Earl, who was a social reformer prominent in the abolition of slavery. The range of names listed suggests Cadbury and Shann were uninterested in making narrow party political points, but were instead trying to provide an incisive critique of what they considered to be an evil practice, and one which was, they believed, perfectly capable of being resolved.

An area that the authors did draw upon was the sad plight of children. Although an historical point was being made, they referred to the Commission on Children's Employment of 1862-1866. Abuses of all kinds were commonplace, but even where legislation had been introduced, it was often violated. Examples included workrooms that were often cramped and ill-ventilated, night work for children, and dangerous working processes that resulted in injury or even loss of life. It is worthwhile noting that Cadbury and Shann, in their opening chapter, had set the scene in such a way as to back up their later opinions with firm evidence. They were clearly loath to be accused of simply producing an opinion piece, arguing a political point of view. They were instead intent on grounding their argument in

evidence that was regarded as independent, for example parliamentary reports, but also by aligning themselves with a range of campaigners for better working conditions in areas like the sweated trades, including a number of Tory reformers.

The second chapter of the *Handbook* brought the story up-to-date, and addressed the question of the sweated trades at the beginning of the twentieth century. Entirely apposite, the authors first addressed the question of 'A Living Wage'. Beginning with the rhetorical question: 'What is a living wage?' the authors admit to some of the difficulties in answering the question. They note the differing prices in goods and accommodation between town and country, as well as between town and town, often relating to levels of trade union membership and activity. Also, whilst there is an admission that equal work should receive equal pay, they remain wedded to the traditional view that men will usually receive more pay than women because they have the responsibilities of a wife and children to support. They also note that different kinds of work as well as the more skilled types of work will often receive different rates of pay. Nevertheless, the idea of a 'living wage' is central to the wage-bargain. They then take it further by differentiating between the wage that merely provides for the necessities of life and existence, and a wage that provides for satisfactory living arrangements, including food and clothing, as well as sufficient for leisure purposes. This was often referred to in this period as the essential elements needed to achieve 'efficiency'.

The 'efficiency movement' was a major movement in many of the industrialised nations in the early years of the twentieth century, including Britain. In the USA it was closely related to scientific management and the ideas of F W Taylor, but in Britain it tended to take a less extreme form. The purpose of the movement was quite simply to eliminate waste in all areas of the economy and society, but particularly within the workplace (Alexander, 2008). In order to make sense of this, and also no doubt to bolster the academic credibility of the *Handbook*, the authors drew upon the definition provided by Alfred Marshall, the foremost economist of his day, and Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge University. Marshall's purpose being to differentiate between the minimum wage to cover the bare necessities, and the living wage, which was designed to go beyond the bare essentials and provide for the more healthier and balanced life:

> We now recognise that a distinction must be made between the necessaries for efficiency and the necessaries for existence; and that there is for each rank of industry, at any time and place, a more or less clearly defined income which is necessary for merely sustaining its members; while there is another and larger income which is necessary for keeping it in full efficiency (Marshall, 1892, pp. 43-44)

The authors could endorse this viewpoint, noting that there was wealth enough within the country to accommodate the wage increases necessary to create and maintain the 'efficient' worker, be he an unskilled labourer or a skilled artisan. Even so, they would not

have shared Marshall's other views that included elements of racism and bigotry against those he called "ignorant and phlegmatic" (Marshall, 1920, p. 528)

Cadbury and Shann then move on and draw attention to Rowntree's book, *Poverty* (1901), a text we have already mentioned. Rowntree identified 21s. 8d. as being the minimum weekly wage for a family to exist in York, but recognised this would only account for acquiring the bare necessities to live. Cadbury and Shann suggest it would be more like 25s in other, more urbanised, towns (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, pp. 14-15). But even this would remain far too low to maintain the levels of 'efficiency' referred to by Professor Marshall. As regards the maximum number of hours to be worked, the authors suggest that the evidence showed there were plenty of firms that were successful with an eight hour day. The third arm of the sweated trades, poor levels of health and safety, particularly in terms of basic sanitation, were also addressed by Cadbury and Shann, drawing on the Annual Reports of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops for 1904 and 1905 to make their point (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, pp. 22-23). Always keen to demonstrate by example, they illustrate their points by reference to the hook and eye carders of Birmingham, the chain makers of Cradley Heath, the nail makers of Bromsgrove and the chair makers of Buckinghamshire, so demonstrating that the sweated trades were a national problem.

By the time the authors have reached the third chapter, the weight of evidence is already impressive, and is now to be further reinforced by reference to the costs of sweating. Cadbury and Shann begin by taking issue with the long-held refrain that interfering with wages (by law, for example), would only result in more companies raising their prices, thus creating a further burden on the community, including the sweated workers themselves. Even worse, it was suggested that many companies would be ruined by the increased costs. The authors denied both these assertions, and instead catalogued a list of what they considered were the already considerable costs of the sweating system. Before addressing that list, it is worthwhile reminding ourselves that resolving the sweated trades through the introduction of a minimum or living wage was not a universally popular solution. There was even considerable division in the Labour movement. Blackburn (2009) notes the role played by Ramsay MacDonald and his wife, Margaret. They believed that Trade Boards introducing minimum wages would be a curse rather than a cure, believing that factory workers would be driven out of the factories into forms of home working, making their lives even worse. Much better, they believed, would be to license home workers. 1906 seems to have been a critical year, the year when the tide of public opinion seemed to move in the direction of legislation. Dilke had been proposing legislation in parliament each year from 1900 to 1905, but it failed to make any progress. But in 1906 a cohort of anti-sweating MPs were elected to parliament: Percy Alden, Charles Masterman, Leo Chiozza Money, George Barnes, Keir Hardie and Will Crooks. Notable too, of course, is that *Women's Work and Wages, Sweating* and the *Handbook of The Daily News Sweated Trades Exhibition*, were all Cadbury ventures and all occurred and were published in 1906/7.

There was by this time a reasonable literature on the sweated trades, but rarely do these three quite distinct and unique contributions from within the Cadbury fold get more than passing references and 'walk-on' parts in the story. Together, this research and the exhibition helped shift public opinion, and more support for the idea of legislation and a minimum wage took hold.

Returning to the list, which is surprisingly simplistic, we are provided with a convincing case against the injustice of the sweated trades. First up is a comment on the general health of the sweated worker. The miserably low wages inevitably result in diminished health for the sweated worker, with the attendant exposure and vulnerability to illness and infection. This is worsened by the poor quality of food the sweated workers relied on for sustenance. The authors investigated the diet of several families in some detail, occasionally lapsing into the language of socialism with a strong moral tone in their descriptions: "this stinting of necessaries for efficiency means a direct economic loss to the nation, because it is a degradation of the labour power of the community" (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, p. 50). The diet for most was very basic, heavily reliant on bread and lard or dripping, cheese, milk, potatoes, meat occasionally, and sometimes fish. This investigation into the social side of life for the sweated workers moved the argument on from the *Daily News* Exhibition, which, important though it was, focused almost exclusively on the working lives of those most affected. The quality of food eaten by sweated workers was rarely discussed, and the next section in the *Handbook*, on school children, was addressed even less. The authors draw upon reports on housing and industrial conditions in Dundee and Edinburgh, to draw out the severe medical plight of schoolchildren in these two cities, and the high mortality rates of children from the working classes, whatever the large town or city (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, p. 56).

The moral tone returns when drink is mentioned. But although Cadbury and Shann regret the effects of drink on working class families, they do acknowledge that it has a two-way relationship with poverty:

> It is true that drinking causes poverty, but it is equally true that depressed physical energy and comfortless homes cause drinking. Not only is poverty the result of drink, but it becomes an active agent in promoting it (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, p. 56).

This message of sympathy and support is a recognition of the difficulties experienced by many who, although at the mercy of drink, would probably prefer it to be otherwise. Most comments that admonished or criticised, were suffused with a degree of sensitivity that suggested Cadbury was not immune to the pain and suffering experienced by many working class families. No doubt some of this understanding would have been gained through his experience of teaching at the Adult School classes, but also, no doubt, as a result of the fairly intimate relationships that existed in the Cadbury company, even at this time, when they employed thousands. This is another example of how Cadbury differed on the idea of

'character' from that of the economist, Alfred Marshall, who cleaved to ideas of a morally defective under-class, thereby individualising social problems (Taylor, 2018). This chapter finished with something of an appeal to those in authority, as well as employers, the need for all employees to receive a living wage. Rejecting the idea that charity and soup kitchens were the answer, they reiterated their argument for radical change, not least by emphasising that character is not innate, but socially shaped:

> We must start at the other end and recognise that any trade that does not pay a living wage to its workers *is a parasite on the community*. The employer in such a trade obtains labour for which he does not pay in his wages bill, and so is enabled to compete unfairly with those trades in which better conditions prevail. He deteriorates the health, vigour, intelligence and *character of his employees*, and in so doing *his trade is a parasite* on the present and future of the nation (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, p. 65).

Cadbury and Shann then turn to the question of trade unionism. Whilst enthusiastic advocates of trade unionism and the benefits it could bring workers, they lament its lack of success in the area of the sweated worker. This at first is something of a puzzle, as it is obvious that the purpose of trade unions is to organise collectively to press for better pay and conditions in the workplace. It would seem obvious that this is an area where trade unions ought to excel. But, as they point out, the history of organising unskilled labour is a story of immense challenges. Whilst there had been occasional successes, it was usually when the workers had been so desperate they were driven to organise. But once the excitement of success wore off, they reverted to previous behaviour. When ordinary conditions prevailed, subscription payments tended to start dropping off. This was often because they seemed to lack the understanding that their best interests were in remaining organised. However, it was also true to say that the wages were often so low that even modest trade union subscriptions could seem considerable, and if this was accompanied by irregular work, would seem too costly.

Turning to the question of how to remedy the situation, the authors inevitably touch on some of the material they covered in their previous publication, *Women's Work and Wages*. After lamenting the lack of trade union strength, they make reference to a range of possibilities including consumers' leagues, the co-operative movement, licensing workers and registering where the work is done, the failure of The Public Health Act to be enforced, lists of outworkers to ensure necessary regulation of the worker and workplace, the promotion of a Home Industries Bill to enable the better regulation of home industries and, finally, what could be learned from some of the legislation that had recently been introduced in America to ameliorate the sweating system. Cadbury and Shann concluded that there really was not much argument about the benefits of some of these areas, not least the legislation that had been introduced, because the Factory Acts that had been introduced over more than a century had effectively improved working conditions

considerably. But the big issue was wages. It was here that reformers faced most resistance:

> .....when we come to deal with wages the orthodox economist is alarmed, and warns the would-be reformer of the danger of interfering with competition, the natural determinant of value (Cadbury and Shann, 1907, p. 112).

Today, it is difficult for us to envisage quite how strong opposition was to state involvement in the wage relationship between employer and employee. The free market approach to determining value was of long-standing, and mainstream economists of the day firmly supported this position. The Whigs, or Liberal Party had been the free marketers of the nineteenth century, and they still retained a membership of employers largely supportive of this approach. It was only with the coming of 'new Liberals' like the Cadbury family, in the early twentieth century, that enthusiasm for intervention and the setting of minimum pay levels began to take shape. Cadbury and Shann demonstrated this in their final chapter, extolling the virtues of the state regulation of wages. This final chapter is of some substance, and attention will be drawn to one or two elements from the text to highlight the commitment Cadbury had to supporting notions of the living wage.

The final chapter of *Sweating* focussed first on identifying ways forward that would improve matters, and these included justifying state interference by making reference to the Wages Boards that operated in Victoria, Australia, and the methods of arbitration used in New Zealand, before drawing attention to Sir Charles Dilke's Bill for Wages Boards in Britain. But perhaps the more interesting section of the chapter is the second part. Here, Cadbury and Shann counter seven objections that were often voiced against the regulation of wages through legislation: a) that such regulation interferes with competition; b) that the increased wages will mean increased cost of production; c) that in some industries the competition of rival commodities would not allow the prices to be raised; d) that many old people and inefficient workers would be dismissed; e) that the minimum wage tends to become the maximum wage; f) that it would be impossible to enforce the provisions, and g) that in Victoria and New Zealand the rises in wages are nominal rather than real. I am not intending to introduce their arguments here, but it is worthwhile noting that this *Handbook* was more than a political polemic. It was a sustained argument in favour of minimum wage legislation supported by detailed evidence and numerous examples. Cadbury and Shann were serious and passionately committed to reform on humanitarian and economic grounds, and had clearly gone to considerable lengths to gather the necessary evidence to present their argument in terms they believed would be compelling.

The final book by Cadbury is reviewed next, and in many ways it is the culmination of the work he had been doing in the company over the previous decade to design and implement a workplace based on the Quaker values of a) treating all employees with honesty and integrity, b) valuing justice and fair play in the workplace, and c) promoting peaceful working relationships.

***Experiments in Industrial Organization* (1912)**

Cadbury's final book can appear deceptively simple, but contains within its pages a finely worked approach to workplace relationships. On the face of it the book appears to be a straightforward description of the Cadbury Bournville plant and the way it was organised and run in 1912. In many ways it is just that. But a hint of the work that had gone into designing and developing the company to that date is provided by Cadbury in the book's dedication:

> This book is dedicated to my father, George Cadbury, and to the memory of my uncle, Richard Cadbury, who together, more than fifty years ago, conceived the ideals which have made possible the development of the experiments described (Cadbury, 1912).

In other words, the company had been experimenting with new and different ways of organising and managing the business for some fifty years. This timescale counters the critique provided by Rowlinson, that the firm merely copied and/or adapted ideas and suggestions by other firms, particularly in the USA. The brothers George and Richard had acquired the business from their father, John, in the early 1860's. Despite it being a period of struggle for the brothers, they had always built up good working relationships with their workers. Gardiner makes this point in his *Life of George Cadbury*:

> Even in these precarious days the brothers began that close and sympathetic relationship with their workpeople which afterwards became so marked a feature of the Cadbury business. At a period when labour combination hardly existed, and when the relations of employer and employed were the relations of nakedly hostile interests, the Cadburys adopted a more enlightened attitude, primarily due to the sympathy with the working classes which their association with the Adult School Movement engendered.....(Gardiner, 1923, p. 26)

It was also to suggest that whilst Edward Cadbury may have been the publicist for the company and its practices, the end result had been very much a collective effort.

Further hints as to the substance of the book are provided in the preface, written by Professor W J Ashley, Professor of Commerce at the University of Birmingham. After drawing attention to the way in which many businesses neglect the very essence of a successful business, *labour*, he noted two policies that needed to be avoided when dealing with employees:

> One is that which devises beneficent arrangements with the intention of lessening the workman's independence; with the purpose, for example, so to attach the workman by material ties to the concern that employs him that he will no longer care about a trade union.....it is incompatible with the democratic temper of the age, and it is almost certain to break down. The other policy is that which fixes its attention on the efficiency of the workman as a living tool, and disregards every other part of his individuality.....they are bound to awaken resentment. For in the

> long run – awkward as the fact is from a 'purely business' point of view – human beings will insist on being treated as human beings, and not as imperfect machines (Cadbury, 1912, pp. x-xi).

These are notable comments in that they are critical of the two main lines of criticism that have been directed at the Cadbury company and its labour practices over the years. First, Ashley opposes the idea of paternalism, suggesting it is incompatible with worker independence, particularly the idea of independent trade unionism. Second, Ashley rejects the idea of de-humanising the worker through excessive and intrusive use of scientific management. This was not shallow praise by Ashley, nor was it the loyalty of an enthusiastic supporter of all that Cadbury did, for he acknowledged that he found himself in the opposite camp to Cadbury on important political issues of the day. Nevertheless, he noted that:

> Everyone who is acquainted at all intimately with the Bournville Works and with those who direct them knows full well that the mainspring of their policy has been a sense of social duty (Cadbury, 1912, p.xii).

Here, an independent source is recognising a sense of social duty, or 'Quaker conscience', as being central to the Cadbury approach. Once again this goes some way towards negating the Rowlinson critique.

In his introduction to the book, Edward Cadbury made it clear that the organisation of the Bournville plant had not come about through any accidental, disjointed or haphazard approach, but instead had been the result of the carefully calibrated pursuit of certain definite ends:

> The supreme principle has been the belief that business efficiency and the welfare of the employees are but different sides of the same problem.

Further...

> The test of any scheme of factory organization is the extent to which it creates and fosters the atmosphere and spirit of co-operation and goodwill, without in any sense lessening the loyalty of the worker to his own class and its organizations (Cadbury, 1912, p. xvii).

Experiments in Industrial Organization was the effective culmination of his major writing, and remains an impressive work. The Bournville plant of the Cadbury company had always had something of an experimental character about it. The desire to experiment and innovate was widespread and compelling, resulting in many new ideas and initiatives taking place. *Experiments in Industrial Organization* is Cadbury's summary of the initiatives that had been introduced at the firm in the field of labour management. In a review of the book in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* in 1913, the reviewer wrote:

> Basing his work primarily on the experiences gained at this plant ..... the author discusses the selection of employees; their education and discipline; the provision of health and safety; the methods of remuneration; and in general, systems of welfare work, with particular emphasis on the social side of the welfare problem. Whatever element of paternalism may be inseparably connected with the building of model communities by socially inclined employers, this book is a valuable contribution to the records of experiments already made in that direction.
> (Anon., *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 1913, pp. 189-202).

It is worthwhile noting from this quote, that the allegation of 'paternalism' is already being levelled at the company and the way it was being organised. In an earlier section of the review the author does seem to base this criticism on Cadbury providing housing for the employees at Bournville, which of course was never the case. Although some housing at Bournville was reserved in the early days for key workers at the plant, the housing was never exclusively for Cadbury employees. This criticism is all the more surprising, given that there is an appendix to the book on the Bournville Village Trust, clearly outlining its specific objective:

> The object is declared to be the amelioration of the condition of the working class and labouring population in and around Birmingham, and elsewhere in Great Britain, by the provision of improved dwellings, with gardens and open spaces to be enjoyed therewith (Cadbury, 1912, p. 274).

Over the years the allegation of paternalism has become the commonplace criticism of Cadbury, but it is interesting to note that here it began very early on in the life of the company.

Perhaps the more important observation is the very structured and systematic way in which the company set about its business. The list of chapters in the book makes this very explicit: 1) The Selection of Employees, 2) Education of employees, 3) Discipline, 4) Provisions for Health and Safety, 5) Methods of Remuneration, 6) Organization, 7) Recreative and Social Institutions, 8) Industrial Conditions, 9) Conclusions. At the beginning of the first chapter, Cadbury reminds the reader of the firm's objectives – to run an efficient company, and to look after its employees well. He believed that without the company being efficient, it was unlikely to last long, and would therefore be of little use to the workers. He states these conditions to be a living wage for all employees, a healthy and safe working environment, and a working week that does not involve excessive hours (Cadbury, 1912, p. 1). The pay and conditions at the company seem to have attracted far larger numbers of applicants than they could employ, so all applications were made through the local Labour Exchange, which effectively operated a filtering system on behalf of the company. For future employees, this was just the beginning of the process. Having surmounted this first hurdle, the applicants (mainly young boys and girls as the company preferred to train their own workers, hopefully providing them with future opportunities for promotion (Cadbury,

1912, p. 7)) then had a series of tests. First was an educational test. This was based on the attainment levels achieved at school. Cadbury's ideal recruit was a youngster who had reached seventh standard (although by 1914 Britain had a basic educational system, for most children this meant completing their education at age 12), as he noted this generally indicated regular attendance at school and good home conditions (Cadbury, 1912, p. 3). He also found it noteworthy that those who arrived with seventh standard also tended to end up earning more at the works. As most employees were on a piecework system, it suggested that those who arrived with the higher standard were physically stronger and were also likely to be more efficient. This recruitment of employees who had spent more time at school, and so were physically stronger and more efficient, was another of the Cadbury tests. Whilst they certainly were not against recruiting those physically weaker, the work itself was inevitably a physical activity, and some level of fitness was required. Those recruited that were travelling some distance had their travel fares subsidised by the company, and all employees received a range of health care. All the basic information on the new employee was usually gleaned from form filling, but all prospective new employees at this time were still interviewed by a director of the company. This must have been a very time-consuming activity, as Cadbury refers to between six and seven hundred young people being recruited each year (Cadbury, 1912, p. 2). This was also the occasion when another Cadbury test was enacted, the "general tone and character" of the new employee was assessed, and in so doing, identifying them for the work they were best suited to do (Cadbury, 1912, p. 6).

Those older, and who were aspiring to work in the offices, encountered the following assessments:

> The examination for boys and girls of fourteen, fifteen and sixteen years of age, who desire positions in the offices, consists of reading aloud from a daily newspaper or magazine, writing, spelling, questions in geography, such as to state the county in which certain towns are situated, and to name the leading towns in a given county; problems in arithmetic in the compound rules, decimals, proportion; and a specimen bill of quantities and prices is given them to extend and to deduct a discount from the total. A fairly high standard of marks is expected (Cadbury, 1912, pp. 6-7).

Cadbury could sometimes be very disappointed with the applicants, as he refers to one group of twelve young women who, when asked the question: 'In what part of the world are the following cities: Aberdeen, Belfast, Calcutta and Vienna?', only one could answer correctly. However, once taken on, the new employees would be fully briefed of their rate of pay, what dental treatment and medical support they would receive, and the pension arrangements and recreational facilities available to them. Most importantly, attendance at evening classes and physical training classes were a condition of employment for all young recruits. Their parents even had to sign a note authorising these arrangements. By today's standards some of these arrangements will seem intrusive, but this did not deter youngsters of the day. Applications always exceeded vacancies (hence the use of the local Labour

Exchange to filter applicants), and there could be a knock-on effect too. Cadbury noted that when making it clear to applicants and parents that they preferred to recruit from those that had completed seventh standard:

> It is also worthwhile to note that this policy has a good effect upon the educational standard in the district, and there is now little difficulty in keeping the higher classes full in the elementary schools (Cadbury, 1912, p. 4).

This brings us on to the second chapter in Cadbury's book, 'Education for Employees'. Having set the scene in the first chapter, telling us how employees were recruited, it is no surprise that Cadbury then moves on to education. Education has always been a priority for Quakers, and this was very much the case with the Cadbury family. Development of the individual, be it in a traditional education facility, or in the workplace, chimed with the Quaker belief in 'that of God in everyone'. Having recruited an employee that they considered valuable, the company would then provide opportunities for the new recruit to grow and develop their talents. Other than 'Methods of Remuneration', this is the longest chapter in the book, and is an example of the priority given to education in the workplace. The approach also appears quite forward-thinking in its emphasis on education as an activity. Cadbury noted the importance of reflective activity in learning and development, anticipating the emphasis given to reflective and experiential forms of learning today. He also noted the value of education for its own sake, not simply as a means to a better paid job, however important that job may be (Cadbury, 1912, p. 16). Fostering a love of education among their employees was a central Cadbury aim.

The chapter provides a detailed breakdown of the range of education the company supported. As most of the young recruits were taken on at or about the age of 14, the firm designed programmes to provide a range of both vocational and general education for them up to the age of 18. These four years were highly structured, and were designed to provide the employee with the necessary skills for them to do their job to a high standard, but also provided education to widen and develop the employees' interests and hobbies, as well as giving them the necessary foundations to develop their learning and skills further. An example of this attention to detail is provided in the syllabus for the Boys' Commercial Course:- First Year: English Language and Literature, Elementary Mathematics, History, Geography and French; Second Year: Continue subjects of the first year to a more advanced standard; Third Year: English, including Commercial Correspondence, Commercial Arithmetic, Modern Book-keeping or Shorthand and French, German, Portuguese or Spanish; Fourth Year: Continued subjects of the third year to a more advanced standard. We can see from this example, that whilst the vocational side was developed, it was only after the necessary grounding had been given in the foundation subjects. Boys on the industrial or general courses received a slightly different education. Their first two years were similar to those on the Commercial course, except they did art and science as opposed to French, and in the third and fourth years if they were on the industrial course and

learning a trade they did courses applicable to the trade. If they were on the general course they did practical mathematics, mechanics and physics in their third years, and had a degree of choice in selecting their own subjects in the fourth year. The Girls' domestic and general courses had similar foundations to the boys in English Language and Literature and Arithmetic in the first two years, but combined this with courses in Art, Needlework, Dressmaking and Physiology. The third and fourth years continued with English Literature, but also included general Housewifery, including Cookery, Laundering, Repairing of Household clothing and linen, Health and Sickness and the Care of Infants. The gender division is clear for all to see in these examples, but it was entirely consistent with the Cadbury Christian view that a woman's main role in life was as a wife and mother, and the education was clearly a preparation for that. This attitude would of course be challenged today, but Britain remained a Christian country in membership, belief and culturally at this time, and it was the view of most men and women too, e.g. "...trends in the practice, organization and theoretical underpinning of religion in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods suggest.....Religion continued to play an important part in politics, society and culture...." (Harris, 1993, p. 177).

Alongside the academic education of young employees, there was physical training too. This is how Edward Cadbury justifies its importance:

> It is now recognised everywhere that the development of character and intelligence requires a concurrent development of a healthy physique. And education on careful and systematic lines is as necessary for the latter as the former. Even in the case of boys and girls who live in good surroundings, and obtain proper nourishment, training is essential if a full and well-balanced physical development is to be obtained. The moral and intellectual qualities resulting from physical training are also valuable in themselves, apart from the fact that a sound and harmonious physical development is a necessary basis to education (Cadbury, 1912, p. 26).

The moral dimension of life is never far from the thoughts of Edward Cadbury. With these thoughts in mind, the company made it compulsory for all boys and girls up to the age of 18 to have physical training. This would be carried out in works time without any financial deductions, but was sufficiently rigorous to have marks awarded during the term, and have an examination at the end of it. Five gymnastic teachers were employed for this purpose (Cadbury, 1912, pp. 26-7). Swimming instruction was also provided for the girls in a swimming bath built by the company. The boys received similar physical training – 2.5 hours per week in works time without loss of pay – throughout the winter months, with the summer months spent swimming in the open-air bath built by the company. Beyond the compulsory instruction just outlined, the boys and girls had the option to continue on a voluntary basis after the age of 18.

But this was not the limit of the Cadbury experiment in education for its employees. Alongside the above education programmes for young employees, the company provided a

range of courses for men and women in the company. Correspondence classes in English and Arithmetic were provided for men and women who felt a need to develop these skills. Men employed on night work were given the opportunity to take classes on two afternoons a week in English and Arithmetic or Physical Training. Classes in ambulance work (first aid) were held under the auspices of the St John's Ambulance Association, and were reported as very well attended (Cadbury, 1912, p. 41). There were opportunities for both boys and girls to attend gardening classes run by Worcestershire County Council on Bournville land supplied by the company. Finally, there was the apprenticeship system itself, which the Cadbury's had specifically designed to improve the apprenticeship arrangements that were current at the time. There was a feeling that as specialisation and sub-division of work had increased in industry, the training that many so-called apprentices received was little more than that of a semi-skilled worker (Cadbury, 1912, p. 45). This is an interesting observation by Cadbury, as he was shortly to take issue with Frederick Taylor and the scientific management school over the harmful effects that their support for greater workplace specialisation and job fragmentation was having on workers (Scientific Management symposium, 1913). As Cadbury went on to say:

> Some substitute for the old system of apprenticeship is wanted, and in the scheme about to be outlined, an attempt has been made to give as wide a practical experience as possible, and to supplement this practice by systematic theoretical training at a technical school (Cadbury, 1912, p. 45).

There were 26 skilled trades at Bournville, and all those selected for an apprenticeship came from within the firm. They would have already undertaken the training referred to above, but would then be selected at the age of sixteen for an appropriate apprenticeship. All apprentices were selected on the basis of reports from their foreman and the evening school, along with a works examination, including an essay on their chosen trade. All successful candidates signed indentures, and agreed to stay with the company until the completion of the apprenticeship at the age of 21.

It is interesting to note that the method of learning employed at Bournville was remarkably similar to David Kolb's reflective learning model (Kolb, 1984). Those of us who have worked in further and higher education will probably have some familiarity with the Kolb model based on four stages: a) concrete experience, b) reflective observation, c) abstract conceptualisation [making sense of what has happened, e.g. interpretation], d) active experimentation. In the letter sent by the company to apprentices, reference is made to the way in which they will become proficient in their chosen trade:

1. *Observation* – Knowledge which you can get by observing the way in which work is done, and by making inquiries from your shop-mates and others.
2. *Theory* – Knowledge which you can get by attending Technical Classes, and from studying text books dealing with your trade.

3. *Practice* – Knowledge which you will get by practical experience in doing the various classes of work upon which you will be engaged, and which the foreman gives you to carry out (Cadbury, 1913, p. 48).

These three elements, which were all assessed in the company at the end of each year, dovetailed neatly into Kolb's second, third and fourth stages. It is remarkable how far ahead of their time the company could sometimes be. John Child, in his book *British Management Thought* observed that Cadbury's book read like a (1960s) personnel management manual (Child, 1969, p. 36).

The third chapter of the book concentrated on discipline in the workplace, and another innovatory approach emerged within the factory. At the time, poor discipline in the workplace usually resulted in the employee receiving some kind of penalty. It could be a fine, a suspension or dismissal. All were used as the standard means of disciplining the offender in the hope that this would result in better behaviour and/or better workmanship. Of course, this worked much less than was expected. The company had pursued this route initially, but the results were so poor that they decided to try alternative methods as a means of bringing about the necessary behavioural change in the employee. As the purpose was to get the employee to reform in some way, a more positive and helpful set of supports were introduced. Here is Cadbury again:

> It must be remembered, that the ideal should be to secure the development in character and efficiency of the employee, to make him feel that he is doing the best work of which he is capable, and that such effort and efficiency will receive adequate recognition and reward. Thus the discipline to be aimed at is, not one that demands unreasoning obedience, but one in which the workers recognise the relationship between all members of the industrial organisation, workers, foremen and employers alike. The worker must recognise that the welfare of the employer and employed are not antagonistic, but complementary and inclusive, and that each position brings its duties and its rights. Thus the workers are led, not driven, and each consciously co-operates with the management in working for a common end (Cadbury, 1912, p. 68).

Although this kind of comment would not appeal to those with radical leanings, referring as it does to notions of co-operation, accommodation and inclusivity, it seems an honourable position to take. This involved an acknowledgement that the worker had a voice that deserved to be heard, a right that was usually exercised through a trade union, but also a recognition that working together was likely to produce greater rewards than antagonistic relationships, and that such a partnership entailed duties as well as rights. It also made another indirect criticism of Taylor's scientific management approach, when it referred to workers being led, not driven.

How then did Cadbury implement this more enlightened approach to discipline? He gives most attention in the book to women, but the same approach applied to the men. The

initial approach of the firm was based on fines and deductions. The three main causes of fines were lateness, spoilt work and bad behaviour. But experience taught the firm that fines were not in any way reformative. The offender simply paid the fine and then often reverted back to previous behaviour. This lack of a deterrent and the belief that payment of the fine wiped out the offence encouraged Cadbury to think afresh. In 1898 the company abolished fines and returned discipline and dismissal into the hands of the directors. Each month a director would interview the offenders in the company of appropriate foremen/women, and the offender would speak on their own behalf. For the average offence the punishment was usually a caution, with a suspension following if the offence was repeated. The offence would remain on the offender's works record for two years, but was removed after that if there was no repeat of the offence. In cases of bad or spoilt work, no deductions were made. Only good work was paid for. Sometimes the quality of work, or, on occasion, behaviour, suffered because the worker was ill or unwell. In such cases, after the necessary medical examinations, the worker would be sent to the firm's convalescent home for several weeks until their health improved. Doctors, nurses and ambulance provision were all supplied in the workplace too. The improvements recorded were dramatic: 166 cases of bad work were recorded in 1899, and this had reduced to 15 by 1910. The 700 cases of bad conduct in 1899 had reduced to 48 in 1910. These figures might appear high in what was nominally a good firm to work for, but the Cadbury's were always willing to learn, and never accepted that they got everything right first time. Apparently, as a means of encouraging a positive and supportive environment, singing was a feature of some departments, where forewomen led their section in singing about every half hour (Cadbury, 1912, p. 212)!

Pay was obviously an issue of importance to employees at the firm, and Cadbury gives this considerable attention in the book. Chapter five was given over to 'Methods of Remuneration', and the first thing to note is that the company used the piecework system. This was a system that, at the time, trade unions tended to oppose. The reason for this was that many firms used the fastest worker as the base-line, and would grade other workers accordingly. This inevitably meant that slower workers received less pay. Cadbury instead focused on the best method of doing the job, as opposed to speed alone. It was noted by the firm that speed alone often resulted in poor quality work. In order to create a better system, the company first acknowledged that method was all important, and therefore the company should first decide what was the best way of doing a job, and then teach all those employees to work that way. This is clearly a nod in the direction of Taylor's scientific management, but Cadbury incorporated the health and welfare needs of the employee into his calculations, rather than attempting to extract as much effort and work out of each individual employee as possible. The first thing to be done was set an adequate minimum wage, and this was based on the earnings of the average worker, not the fastest or slowest workers (Cadbury, 1912, p. 142). Once such rates were set, they would only be changed at long intervals, and with good reason. Cadbury was always supportive of the employees

joining trade unions, but sometimes the rate of pay at the company discouraged this. Here is Cadbury again:

> Where a trade union is representative of a particular branch of work, it has been the practice to comply with its rules as regards rates of pay, hours of work, etc., but the minimum rate set by the union is not adhered to as a maximum, as in many instances men are paid above the union rate, the latter being accepted only as a basis of valuation for the workmen; if they are worth more they get more. For example, in one large department the minimum fixed by the firm is a shilling per week above the trade union minimum, and this is for a week of 48 hours against the trade union 53 hours (Cadbury, 1912, p. 159).

Alongside pay, the company provided pension schemes for men and women employees. The men's scheme was inaugurated in 1906 and the women's in 1911. The firm had originally intended to have one scheme for all employees, but because women, on average, worked fewer years at the company, often leaving to get married, such a scheme would not have been fair to both sets of employees. As a result, after deliberation on the best way forward, they decided on a separate scheme for women. The men's scheme was contributory, the employer and employee paying equal amounts. The amounts paid depended on the age of joining, but varied from 2.5% at the age of 16 to 5.5% at the age of 50. The pension age was fixed at 60, so as to allow a greater number of employees to benefit. If it had been fixed at 65, the more usual age, it would have resulted in a lower number of pensionable years for the men. The women's scheme, although ran differently to the men's, resulted in the same end product: a sound pension on reaching retirement. Although the pension arrangements were well ahead of their time, government initiatives about this time had encouraged employers to think about pension arrangements for employees, and trade unions had always seen pensions as something employers should provide. The first 'old age' pension was introduced by the Liberal government in 1908, and was only available to men aged over 70. Workplace pensions had begun emerging as early as the 1870s, when pension funds for nurses began. Further schemes for civil servants, teachers and police followed in the 1890s, and railway companies were some of the first private companies to provide pensions at about the same time. The same was true of the sick pay arrangements. *The National Insurance Act 1911* made arrangements for sickness payments, as well as pension and unemployment pay, and companies obviously had to comply with such legislation when it applied to them. In Cadbury's case, the company continued to pay sickness pay until the arrangements under the 1911 Act superseded their arrangements from 13 January, 1913, although they continued to pay a funeral benefit, and all boys and girls under the age of 16 continued to receive sick pay paid by the firm as the 1911 Act excluded them.

One of the more interesting chapters in the book relates to the way in which the company began providing the employees with a voice in the workplace. Cadbury's chapter on 'Organization' is instructive, because it conveys the early stages of employee

involvement up to 1912, when the book was published. It was not until 1918 that the men's and women's works councils were introduced into the company. These institutions receive a fuller investigation in the next section of the thesis, but here, I simply provide a more detailed insight into the beginnings of the scheme. In May 1902 the company inaugurated a suggestions scheme to "induce and encourage employees to make suggestions concerning the welfare both of the business and of themselves" (Cadbury, 1912, p. 212). Essentially, the company was trying to get the employees to take an interest in their work and their environment. The idea was certainly successful, and both men and women took to it with some enthusiasm. Ideas were welcome on a wide range of matters, including anything from how goods were manufactured to ways in which the company might be managed better. There were two committees, one each for men and women, and the committee had eight members, three being appointed by the firm and the other five being elected from among the employees. Great care was taken to ensure that suggestions were considered by those familiar with the areas concerned, and those in the best position to make a fair judgement as to the value of the suggestion. The committees met weekly to consider suggestions, and if there was any disagreement on a particular suggestion, a vote was taken. Suggestions accepted received a cash prize, and were also entered into an award for a special prize at six-monthly intervals. The success of the schemes can be measured by their numbers. Although numbers varied from year to year, in October 1902 the men's suggestion scheme received 279 submissions, but averaged well over a thousand per year for the next 10 years, reaching a peak of 1938 in 1910. Similarly, the women's scheme began with 325 in October 1902, averaged well over a thousand per year for the next 10 years, reaching a peak of 1730 in 1906. Cadbury's views were quite clear:

> There is no doubt that the efficiency of the works at Bournville is assisted by the suggestion scheme, and it has been found that the good accomplished, is not only in the pecuniary value to the firm or to the suggestor, but also in the development of the mental and creative power, which makes men and girls more efficient and valuable workers, and fosters an intelligent independence (Cadbury, 1912, p. 218).

Given that suggestions committees elected the majority of their number by ballot from the workforce, this was a considerable concession by an employer in the first decade of the twentieth century. Cadbury's comment also implies that this was not simply about monetary reward, but was also about fostering "an intelligent independence" among the employees. This doesn't recommend itself to paternalism, but rather a spirit of creative individuality. Some of this language may appear a bit far-fetched in today's working environment, but it is worthwhile reminding ourselves that there has been a spate of recent writing on the importance of craftsmanship in the workplace (Sennett, 2008, Crawford, 2009 and Korn, 2017). The emphasis being placed on the combined use of head, hand and heart to bring about a more fulfilling working life, and these writers have all received widespread approval if the reviews are anything to go by.

From the beginning of the century, each of the four directors of the company took responsibility for a range of specific departments. Each of these departments would have a committee chaired by the director responsible for that department. Unfortunately, Cadbury does not explain how the committee was chosen, although at this stage in the business it is reasonable to assume they were senior members of the department, or those with specific responsibilities.

> In each case, the director is chairman of the committee, so that he is fully aware of the details of his department, while as a member of the Board of Directors he represents that department and controls its relation to the general business. He brings to the Board of Directors any proposals emanating from his committee or department, and on the other hand, takes to his committee for consideration and discussion the various matters that are referred to them before being carried out (Cadbury, 1912, p. 201).

This level of participatory involvement by staff in elements of decision-making at the company right at the beginning of the twentieth century was well ahead of its time, and gave rise to the next stage in the evolution of employee involvement in 1905. Men's and Women's Works Committees were set up, each with 10 members. Eight members were appointed by the directors, and two from among the employees themselves. The employees were all foremen or forewomen, so were not from the shop floor itself. In addition, in the early days the committees tended to concentrate on the social and welfare side of the business. The responsibilities covered a wide range of areas within the works, and there were slight variations between those of the Men's and Women's Works Committees. The Men's Works Committee looked after planning in relation to building works and repairs, holidays, inspection of the workplace, including equipment and facilities like bridges, fire appliances, ladders, tunnels, etc., recreation grounds and buildings, as well as dealing with cases of distress, where an employee was incapacitated and unable to work for long periods. There were also four standing sub-committees for accidents, sick benefit, works holidays and allotments. The Women's Works Committee seemed to have even more input than the men's. As with the Men's Works Committee, they looked after areas like accidents, building plans and repairs, general improvements to the workplace, inspections and cases of distress, but also, and very interestingly, staffing arrangements:

> The committee fills vacancies as they occur in the staff of forewomen and under-forewomen by sending in nominations for the approval of the Board. It conducts periodical examinations for those who wish to qualify as under-forewomen, and selects from the list of those who have passed the examination, those who are best qualified for work of this kind (Cadbury, 1912, p. 210).

Although the Board made the ultimate decision in terms of appointment, this willingness to give a works committee, and a women's works committee at that, the opportunity to have an input into the appointment process, was a most unusual, if not unique, privilege. The salient point here, however, is *that this is 1905, and well before the Whitley Councils were*

introduced into some workplaces after the First World War. This again underscores how Cadbury was leading on these developments, rather than reacting to the times.

Although the book was not an academic text in any usual understanding of the description, for example being heavy with citations, it nevertheless attracted widespread interest at the time, and was reviewed in a range of periodicals. The reviewers in the *Times Literary Supplement* noted that the motive that initiated many of the 'experiments' at the Bournville plant was through "a sincere sense of social duty on the part of employers towards the people they employ. No one can read this straightforward and unassuming description of all the arrangements at Bournville without being impressed by the perfect sincerity of the writer and the great labour and thought that have been given to the work of organization" (Shadwell and Shadwell, 1913, p.118). As with the earlier book on *Women's Work and Wages*, Cadbury's research seemed to be widely reviewed in the USA. This look at *Experiments in Industrial Organization* can be completed with some examples from those reviews, and their thoughts on the Cadbury 'experiment'. When referring to the "social side of the welfare problem", the reviewer in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* suggested that "this book is a valuable contribution to the records of experiments already made in that direction" (Anon., *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 1913, p. 191). The reviewer in the *Journal of Political Economy* provided more praise:

> This interesting and suggestive book records various industrial experiments on a small scale but such as are being urged or tried out today on a larger scale in an attempt to adjust more satisfactorily the relations between the employer and employee.....The special significance of the plan is that it has developed over a period of fifty years with a constantly growing establishment that in 1911 employed over 6000 people.....The author's presentation of this material adds to its value. His account of each feature is concise yet remarkably effective in giving just the information that is significant to one interested in any phase of factory organization (*Journal of Political Economy*, Jun., 1913, p. 575)

A final, quite detailed review by J L Gillin in the *American Journal of Sociology*, makes a simple, concluding point about Cadbury's book:

> .....we can be very grateful for the insight which his book gives us into the provisions which an enlightened interest has created in the organization of one great industrial plant.....It is a record of an experiment which can be regarded with interest by all those who are concerned in better relationships between employer and employee, and a more humane consideration of the welfare of employees.
> (Gillin, 1913, July, p. 107)

Much more could be elicited from this book about the Bournville works, but sufficient has been said to indicate it sits firmly within the pluralist tradition. Much of it will seem commonplace in today's working environment, but to grasp the full extent of its innovation

and creativity, we need to turn back to the grim reality of the early twentieth century workplace. It was usually dirty, unhygienic, unsafe, and where you spent most of your daylight hours. The pay was often pitiful, and this was likely to remain your lot for the rest of your life. Given such arrangements elsewhere, one can see why Cadbury never had any trouble recruiting staff.

Having provided a flavour of the Cadbury labour management arrangements at Bournville, it is clear that this was a company well in advance of the standards of its time. This included a voice for workers, which was well ahead of the Whitley proposals, and a range of social and recreational facilities that were designed to enhance the lives of their employees, not strip them of their independence and sense of responsibility. Furthermore, as the main publicist for the company's approach, Edward Cadbury was prepared to defend this 'experiment' in labour management at a wider level. The next section provides just such an example, where Cadbury engages in a symposium on scientific management with, amongst others, F W Taylor, founder of scientific management and G D H Cole, advocate of 'Guild Socialism'.

A Key Rowlinson Critique

But before doing that, there is a need to return to a central thrust of the Rowlinson critique, namely that the 'the Quaker conscience' was not an important influence but a form of 'historiography', or post-hoc rationalisation (Rowlinson, 1988, p. 377). *Experiments in Industrial Organization* was Cadbury's main work, and provided a detailed account of what was happening in the company in 1912. In a joint-authored paper, 'The invention of corporate culture: A history of the histories of Cadbury', Rowlinson and Hassard (1993) again levy the charge of an invented history, this time aiming at an American audience:

> Cadbury, a UK confectionary company well known for its Quaker traditions, developed a corporate culture by attributing significance to the Quaker beliefs of the Cadbury family. A history.....constructed by the company, including a centenary celebration in 1931, were part of the process of giving meaning into the firm's labor-management institutions (Rowlinson and Hassard, 1993, p. 299).

The first part of the paper considers a range of concepts and ideas, including organisation studies, business history and culture. A particular concern for Rowlinson and Hassard is that organisational analysts of culture have often been ahistorical in their approach, preferring to invoke notions of group and leadership theory rather than providing historical example. They suggest that instead of generating an understanding of organisational culture from history and the historical context, many commentators prefer to draw upon psychology and psychological concepts like 'leadership' to inform their approach. No doubt there is much merit in this criticism, but later, when the authors use Cadbury as the company of choice to illustrate their concerns, they appear to repeat the mistakes of being ahistorical. First, they begin by stating that their intended objective will be to produce:

> a competing narrative …… which incorporates and explains rather than refutes previous narrative histories of the company. The competing narrative is of an 'invented tradition,' instead of a story of a 'founder.' The test of the narrative will be whether the reader is persuaded that it is convincing even in the case of a culture as strong as Cadbury's, and in the confines of a journal in which the weight of historical evidence, the usual measure of historical argument, cannot be judged by counting the number of footnotes (Rowlinson and Hassard, 1993, p. 303).

Rowlinson and Hassard note and acknowledge the generally held views of a range of business historians that Cadbury's labour management policies were inspired by the Quaker religious beliefs of the family (Williams, 1931; Emden, 1939; Windsor, 1980). But they then go on to suggest an alternative explanation. Five 'labour management' policies are identified as being the result of contemporary social movements, as opposed to a specific Quaker ethic (Cadbury, 1912, pp. 305-7). First, they consider the Bournville village. Here, rather than acknowledge the pioneering work of George Cadbury and his vision for Bournville, Rowlinson and Hassard suggest more credit should be given to the idea of the 'Garden City movement' than to any Quaker influence. This is odd given that the Garden City Association was not set up until 1900, but the first houses that formed part of the Bournville village were built in 1894. It is correct to say that George Cadbury was a supporter of the 'Garden City' approach, and to his credit the first conference of the Association was held at Bournville in 1901. However, a more accurate interpretation might be to suggest that the Bournville 'experiment' encouraged and supported the idea of the Garden City movement, rather than vice versa.

The second area of focus is that of welfare in the workplace. A wide range of welfare practices were developed within the company, principally between the years 1899 and 1909, and resulted in the introduction of a range of reforms that put the company at the forefront of people management at the time. Rowlinson and Hassard suggest these reforms were the result of George Cadbury Junior's visit to the USA in 1901, and were simply replicating practices already being used in companies like the National Cash Register company. These practices seemed to include the idea of a suggestion scheme, the company magazine, and the development of a committee system involving employees. In other words, much of this had little to do with Quakerism. Is this fair to Cadbury? Edward Cadbury had put forward the idea of an 'invention scheme' [i.e. suggestion scheme] in May 1899, although the Boardroom discussion had focused on apprentices rather than employees generally (Cadbury Board Minutes, May, 1899). The idea of company magazines was not new when Cadbury's introduced theirs in 1902. Heller (2008) suggests company magazines first began to appear in Britain around the 1880s. Indeed, *The Ibis Magazine* of the Prudential Assurance Company began in 1878, so there would be no need for George Cadbury Junior to go to the USA to pick up this idea. And the idea of committees and committee systems is something that has been part of the world of Quakerism since its beginnings. Decision-making through the Quaker business method is the usual way of

reaching a decision, and experiment and innovation have long been Quaker traits within that tradition.

A few words on the Quaker business method is appropriate at this point. A Quaker business meeting is essentially a meeting for worship, but with a pre-set agenda. This is the case whether it is a local group, an area or regional group, or indeed a national group. Friends come together in silence, in order to draw closer to God and each other, and do this through seeking the guidance of the Inward Light. The Clerk is the central figure, who will take each item on the agenda in turn. The item under consideration will not be debated. Instead, in an atmosphere of worship, the gathering will try to discern what love requires of them. Spoken contributions may be offered as ministry, but they will be wrapped in silence. There will be no voting, as the group is not trying to achieve a consensus or a majority vote, but instead is trying to work in harmony with the Spirit. Once this appears to have been achieved, the Clerk has to discern the outcome (i.e. taking the 'sense of the meeting'), and prepares a draft minute for consideration by those present. The draft minute can be amended at this stage, but, once agreed, will be accepted collectively as having been reached through the discipline of waiting together in the Light, in a sincere search for love and truth. This process may seem odd and unusual, but has been the Quaker way of reaching decisions for centuries. Whilst there appears no evidence to suggest this approach was the way in which Quaker companies like, Cadbury, Fry or Rowntree held their board meetings, it is reasonable to assume it had some bearing on the way in which decisions were reached. As Quakers have never differentiated between the sacred and the secular, believing their lives to be 'all of a piece', it is more than possible that a board of five Quakers, as at Cadbury, would have at least made decisions approaching the Quaker business method model.

A third feature raised for critique by Rowlinson and Hassard is the sexual division of labour in the company. This included the example of the dismissal of women when they married. This is clearly old-fashioned and sexist by today's standards, but it was reasonably commonplace at the time (e.g. Boots, Sainsbury's, Great Western Railway, ICI, as well as in teaching and the Civil Service). Indeed, the rigid sexual division was maintained by many companies until after the Second World War. Remarkably, the Foreign Office only ended the policy in 1973. Despite its discriminatory nature today, at the time the Cadbury's considered this to be sound Quaker, i.e. Christian, practice. As noted earlier, the belief was that women best served their roles as wives and mothers when free from the distracting demands of paid labour. This was a view that Edward Cadbury had effectively supported in his book, *Women's Work and Wages*, when he promoted the idea of a living wage sufficient for a husband and father to support his family (Cadbury, Matheson and Shann, 1906). Whilst we would shun such a discriminatory approach today, to critique Cadbury on these grounds is anachronistic, reading back into history contemporary values that were not prevalent at the time. The practice might strike us as abhorrent today, but it could also be read as perfectly consistent with an approach rooted in Quakerism *at that time*.

Fourth, Rowlinson and Hassard touch upon scientific management and its use by the company. As this has already been noted and addressed when considering Rowlinson's first paper, there is no need to repeat the comment here. Finally, the authors make reference to the Cadbury Works Council scheme which does warrant some explanation. The first of these councils met in the company in 1918, but rather than accept that there could have been any particular Quaker impulse to create works councils, the authors suggest it was more the result of the Whitley proposals. The Whitley proposals for works councils in Britain had been the outcome of a report produced at the end of the First World War by John Henry Whitley, M.P. The idea was to bring forward proposals to improve industrial relations in British industry in the post-war period. Whilst the Whitley Council idea no doubt stimulated further thinking at the Cadbury company, to suggest the works councils at Cadbury were the result of this government intervention *alone* is to ignore the Works Committees that had been in existence in the company *since 1905*. The Works Councils could no doubt have been influenced by the Whitley proposals, as they were introduced at about the same time, but they were also the logical outcome of the Works Committees already in existence at the company. Taken together, Rowlinson and Hassard's five criticisms fail to substantiate the claims that the Quaker influence on the company was something of a 'invented tradition'.

To summarise, what we see when reading *Experiments in Industrial Organization* is a sincere attempt at introducing an approach to industrial relations that, whilst sitting within the pluralist paradigm, acknowledges the complexity and variety of human behaviour by designing a workplace that both *works*, and is *successful*. We now turn to the symposium on scientific management.

Scientific Management in Industry **(1914)**

In August 1912 an article entitled 'An Essay on Scientific Management' was published in the magazine *The Nation* (now part of the *New Statesman*). This gave prominence to F.W. Taylor's theory of scientific management, although it had been receiving some attention elsewhere, mainly in professional engineering publications. The article gave a favourable description of the method, and was largely supportive. Alongside this review another article by J A Hobson entitled 'Scientific Management' was published in *Sociological Review* in July 1913. Hobson saw the gains to be made from introducing scientific management, but he also accepted it would involve compromise on the part of employees. To overcome this penalty for workers, he suggested a shorter working week. This led to a meeting or symposium of The Sociological Society in November, 1913, which gave a thorough hearing to the whole idea of scientific management. Edward Cadbury read the main paper on 'Some Principles of Industrial Organisation: An analysis of the case for and against scientific management', which provided an outline of scientific management as he understood it, and a number of criticisms that he thought appropriate and relevant, emphasising that these were borne out by practical experience and not abstract thought.

Among the contributors to the symposium were J A Hobson, already mentioned above, G D H Cole, the proponent of guild socialism, and C Bertrand Thompson of Harvard University, who had worked with Taylor, and made a particularly engaging contribution advocating scientific management. But perhaps the most stimulating contributor was F W Taylor himself, the author and originator of the scientific management approach. To a degree, the symposium became a debate between Cadbury and Taylor, although all contributors made interesting comment.

If we begin with Cadbury's 'Some Principles of Industrial Organisation: The Case For and Against Scientific Management', this will provide us with a flavour of Cadbury's case. As always with Cadbury, his argument is straightforward and simple:

> The purpose of my paper is to summarise briefly the principles and methods of Scientific Management, to discuss its advantages and to suggest what seems to me to be its dangers. Then I wish to show in an actual business organization we have endeavoured to carry out some of its principles and avoid some of its dangers (Cadbury, 1914, p. 1).

We notice immediately that there is something of an even and balanced approach to the notion of 'scientific management'. In other words, Cadbury is approaching this new workplace method with an open mind, and intends to reach a reasonably impartial viewpoint. Clearly, he will approach scientific management with a set of values that he already has, most of these being the product of his Quaker faith and upbringing. But he does not begin with a pejorative viewpoint, one designed to find only fault with this new system. Instead, he begins by using Taylor's own words to outline his approach. No doubt this was diplomatic, but also expressed a recognition that Taylor's schema was likely to appeal to many employers, particularly those who were more concerned with profit rather than employee wellbeing:

> The managers assume the burden of gathering together all the traditional knowledge which in the past has been possessed by the workmen and then of classifying, tabulating and reducing this knowledge to rules, laws and formulae, which are immensely helpful to the workmen in doing their daily work. In addition to developing a *science* in this way.....(Cadbury italicising 'science' when quoting Taylor, Cadbury, 1914, p. 1).

It is noticeable that Cadbury italicises the word 'science', suggesting he has an issue with its use in this way. Even so, Cadbury continues to use the term without further comment at this early stage in his argument. What Cadbury does do, however, is summarise Taylor's system in a short paragraph:

> In short, the science says it is possible to find the best man (sic), make him produce the best possible work as to quality and quantity, and at the same time improve the wages, the health, and *the morals* of the worker (my italics, Cadbury, 1914, p. 1).

Having done this, Cadbury acknowledges that he can only address some of the issues in the space of his paper, but in so doing recognises there are many issues that arise. Instead, he prefers to first give praise to Taylor by listing some of the practices Taylor promotes, e.g. formulating accurate and detailed costing; the scientific planning of machinery in the workshop; the planning of work flow from one process to another; the careful and accurate instruction of workers in their jobs; providing the appropriate and necessary tooling for the work; finally, the selection of the right people for the right work.

It is on this last principle that much debate arose, not least instigated by Cadbury himself. Deciding who was best suited to particular jobs and tasks raises issues of a moral quality, and this is where much debate over 'Taylorism' has taken place. Before addressing the issue of the 'task idea', as he refers to it, Cadbury notes with approval the work that had been done in the USA on the matter of selecting and equipping the worker with the necessary abilities and skills to do specific jobs. So, for example, there is reference to a bureau in Boston set up in 1908 to help boys and girls receive advice that could help them enter the kinds of work for which they were best equipped (Cadbury, 1914, p. 2). Clearly this is the forerunner of what used to be called in the UK, 'Careers Advice Centres'. Another example is of experiments carried out on American railway services, and the sorts of abilities required to carefully sort and select cycle bearings, picking out those that were faulty (Cadbury, 1914, pp. 2-3). Cadbury notes the importance of this kind of physical and psychological selection, and provides an example of the way in which *young women* were selected for employment at Bournville, incorporating use of the female works doctor and aptitude tests where appropriate. Cadbury was obviously happy with the results of such an approach, as he made clear the company would develop such approaches further (Cadbury, 1914, p. 3).

But the issue that exercised Cadbury most was the 'task idea' and the fragmentation and de-skilling of work into routine, repetitive tasks that can then be speeded up at the expense of the worker:

> It is here that we reach the most important point, for we are dealing not with inanimate things, but with men and women, with all their physiological and psychological needs and possibilities, as well as prejudices and social sympathies. Even if on the productive side the results are all that the promoters of scientific management claim, there is still the question of the human cost of the economies produced (Cadbury, 1914, p. 3).

Cadbury draws heavily on Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management* to ensure he is both understanding the text correctly, as well as illustrating the crudity of some of Taylor's approach. Here we see examples of Cadbury's humane decency taking precedence over efficiency. For example, he draws attention to what has since become emblematic of Taylor's text, his reference to the kind of unskilled person – the character of Schmidt - required to handle pig-iron: "he shall be so stupid and phlegmatic that he more nearly

resembles in his mental make-up the ox than any other type." (Taylor, 1911, p. 59) However, Cadbury goes on to make a more telling point by drawing attention to a later Taylor reference that is at the centre of Cadbury's criticisms:

> It is only through *enforced* standardization of methods, *enforced* adoption of the best implements and working conditions, and *enforced* co-operation that this faster work can be assured (Cadbury italicising 'enforced' when quoting Taylor, Cadbury, 1914, p. 4).

Once again, the italicisation displays Cadbury's feelings on the matter. Even so, he recognised that the wage incentive for the worker was considerable. Anything from 30 to 60% above the average rate was being paid once this system was fully introduced. Taylor maintained that he was against overworking the employee, but Cadbury was sceptical of this view. He doubted that the 'efficiency engineers', as he called them, had adequately addressed the costs of the system on individuals, and, ultimately, society.

Cadbury first raised the question of physical strain. Whilst he acknowledged that enforced periods of rest could go some way towards easing the pressures on the worker, in complicated tasks this was less likely to be the case. When the focus is on limited and intensive tasks, this inevitably means increased monotony for the worker, and probably a degree of nervous strain. Proving this was not always that easy, but it was certainly the view of many workers. Cadbury goes on to draw attention to the role *of girls and women*, suggesting they were likely to succumb to fatigue more easily and quickly. Not the kind of comment that would be made in industry today, but one that perhaps remains valid, given the factory legislation that prevents women doing certain work. Cadbury saw this minute sub-division of work as being the harbinger of 'drive' and 'speeding-up', the inevitable consequence being the diminished physical and mental well-being of the workers (Cadbury, 1914, p. 5). Cadbury also noted Taylor's opposition to trade union membership and activity. This was a view many employers would have either ignored, or, worse, welcomed. But not Cadbury. At this stage (1914), Cadbury felt that trade unions were still too weak in size and number to exert much influence in defending workers against the imposition of scientific management. He recognised that trade unions were raising similar objections to his, in that they too felt the worker would suffer physical exhaustion and mental restriction. He also expressed some hope that trade unions would prevent the spread of scientific management once they were strong enough to do so (Cadbury, 1914, p. 5). Cadbury noted that wages would inevitably rise in those companies that introduced scientific management, if only because they were small in number. Even so, it is notable that Cadbury felt that some workers would move workplace rather than allow a company to interfere with the way in which they did their work. This is an illuminating comment, in that it tells us that at this stage in Britain's industrial development the worker still had considerable say in how the job was done. This level of resistance to employer 'interference' in the work process, and confidence in one's own skill, is perhaps another reason why some workers remained resistant to trade union membership.

Of course, any benefits that might accrue to the worker in increased wages would dissipate once the monopoly value of a small number of firms introducing scientific management became more widespread. Whilst there might still be some attraction to the consumer in reduced prices, the real downside for workers would be a reduction in the amount and range of work available, as well as a considerable reduction in their bargaining power. In concluding his comments on the position of wages under scientific management, Cadbury drew attention to the differential bonus system. In other words, the element of pay that accrued to the worker in return for his or her increased levels of production. He drew attention to the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, who had voted against the continuation of a differential bonus system by some 24,314 to 4,777, a substantial majority. In essence, when the calculations were made, the bonus paid for the extra production or time saved rarely amounted to more than a rate of pay of time-and-a-quarter. The Engineers felt this percentage was out of all proportion to the gains made by industry. Demonstrating his support for the views of trade unions on scientific management at this time, Cadbury made use of a report drawn up by the Trades Union Congress:

> In respect to this matter, a committee of the Trade Union Congress was appointed in 1909 to investigate the methods and defects of the premium bonus system, and they reported that "almost without exception the premium bonus system is condemned by all who have practical experience of its working," "that it destroys the principle of collective bargaining"; "that it is destructive of trade-unionism and discourages organization"; "that it is one of the causes of unemployment"; "that it leads to scamping of work"; "that it prevents the proper training of apprentices"; that it promotes selfishness amongst the men in the shop and "that it promotes workshop favouritism." (Cadbury, 1914, p. 6, quoting from the *Report of the Joint Committee of the Trades Union Congress on The Premium Bonus System*, 1910)

This is compelling stuff, and leaves us in no doubt where Cadbury's pro-trade union and pluralist sympathies rest. However, for Cadbury, whose own firm was enthusiastic about running an efficient operation, the real problem was a human one. He remained concerned about the deleterious effect such methods would have on the well-being of the worker. Cadbury argued that under present conditions even the labourer had a limited amount of freedom and initiative, and could often carry out mechanical processes in a number of different ways. Yet, despite this, the work often remained monotonous and depressing, usually worked in uncomfortable conditions. If this was the case, how much worse would it be under scientific management? The impact upon the worker could only be more alarming, and any compensation, in the form of improved pay, would inevitably result in a further deterioration in the life of the labourer.

Cadbury was not ignorant of the deficiencies in the working arrangements in many firms, and went on to recognise that there was waste in the present system. He also recognised the need to improve matters, bringing about improvements in the selection of workers, more attention being given to the timing of jobs, standardisation in the tools and

equipment at the worker's disposal, as well as careful costing of work processes. But what he was not prepared to countenance was "the reduction of the workman to a living tool, with differential bonus schemes to induce him to expend his last ounce of energy" (Cadbury, 1914, p. 7). Before going on to make a spirited defence of trade unionism, Cadbury first makes a general point about social relationships in Edwardian Britain:

> Our whole scheme of social, industrial and political life rests on the idea and practice that management and control are in the hands of the middle-classes and the rich. The controlling positions in the army and navy, in the civil service, and in all the professions are practically barred to the workers, and the growth of the Labour Party and Trade Unionism, and even Syndicalism properly understood, are expressions of the workman's demand to control his own life (Cadbury, 1914, p. 7).

He went on to indicate that this demand would be prosecuted through industrial action, as indeed it already appeared to be, if we note the strike statistics for the period immediately prior to the First World War.

When turning to the issue of trade unionism, Cadbury first notes the differences between Britain and the USA. He suggests the spirit and practice of trade unionism in America is different, in part because it is weaker, but also draws attention to the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) as being syndicalist and revolutionary. Even so, he still feels it does not justify the position taken by the pioneers of scientific management, who were explicitly wanting to weaken the independence of the workers. He uses H L Gantt and his text, *Work, Wages and Profits* (1910), to prove his point. Instead, Cadbury supports the independence of the worker and trade unionism, and indicates the way forward as being to work through the trade unions and their preferred mode of working: collective bargaining. Cadbury recognised that trade unions had been remiss in not acknowledging some of the new methods and principles, but they should instead use collective bargaining as the means to understand its possibilities and extract its benefits. Before going on to provide examples of an alternative approach to scientific management, as practiced in his own company, Cadbury reiterates his own standpoint:

> It seems to me that in the long run it will defeat itself for employers to consider a man merely as a tool. *We must keep in mind that a man and his personality is always an end in itself*, and working people in the future will have to be treated less as tools and more as men. This is the principle on which we have endeavoured to organize our own factory. We have always believed that business efficiency and the welfare of the employees are but different sides of the same problem (Cadbury, 1914, p. 8).

This appears to move beyond the position Cadbury held in *Experiments in Industrial Organization* (1912), where he suggests that creating and fostering an atmosphere and spirit of goodwill, without in any way trying to draw the workers away from their own class interests, particularly through trade union activity, should be the objective. Here, emphasis

is instead placed on the worker as being intelligent, capable, but above all, independent. This was to emphasise the worker as a human being, and intrinsically worth more than improving 'efficiency'. It is possible that Cadbury's engagement with Taylor in debate led him to place renewed emphasis on this.

Cadbury ended his argument by drawing on examples from his own company, of the way in which they had organised the workplace at Bournville, "with a view to minimising the evils which have seemed almost inherent in any factory organization" (Cadbury, 1914, p. 9). Many of these examples have already been provided in the earlier section on *Experiments in Industrial Organization*, but in order to provide more of a practical 'feel', Cadbury concludes his address to the Sociological Society by describing the actual working practices in one department, the card-box department. The card-box department employed nearly 500 women, and its working arrangements were planned in some detail, so as to ensure "the human side" of the workplace was always maintained. First, a director would always select the new employee, after she had been seen by the works dentist and doctor. As card-box making was a skilled trade, the new employee would be expected to show some ability. She would also have four years of education and four years of physical training in the employ of the company. The company would always ensure the apprenticeship was served on the shop floor, and not in the artificial surroundings of a trade school. Learning 'on the job' was a tried and tested method, and the Cadburys' believed it worked because it familiarised the apprentice with the equipment, tools and environment that they would experience on a day-to-day basis. The training was always progressive, and allowed the apprentice to progress through each stage of learning. One operation at a time was mastered before progressing to the next, and the apprentice only made a complete box after all stages had been mastered. Tests would be administered regularly to ensure the learning was achieved, and visits to other factories were made to familiarise workers with certain processes instrumental to card-box making, e.g. visiting a local paper mill to understand the manufacture of paper. This attention to detail was the way in which Cadbury felt workers would remain interested and involved, rather than merely becoming the appendage of a manufacturing process (Cadbury, 1914, pp. 14-16).

Cadbury concluded his address by reiterating his main points: First, he wanted to emphasise his objections to the Taylor system of management, especially with regard to what he termed the 'task idea', and, secondly, he felt that in giving examples of the way in which the Cadbury company had organised the workplace to produce a productive and efficient workforce, they had demonstrated a better way of working, one which gave the workforce more control over their working lives (via trade unions, works committees, etc.):

> The problem of the future which the capitalist classes have to meet is in the first place a wider and more equitable distribution of wealth and leisure, and in the second, to devise some method by which the workers can have some share in the control of the industry in which they are engaged (Cadbury, 1914, p. 19).

This reference by Cadbury to 'capitalist classes' is most unusual for an employer, and once again represents his strong feelings on the need for wide-ranging change in manufacturing industry.

In replying, Taylor set about responding to Cadbury's criticisms by first acknowledging Cadbury had "made a very earnest and impartial effort to represent fairly the principles of Scientific Management" (Taylor, 1914, p. 32). But he quickly goes on to take issue with Cadbury, suggesting that instead of using his own company to provide an alternative approach to workplace management, he should, instead, have investigated a company that was applying the scientific management principles. Taylor even goes so far as to suggest "he [Cadbury] is, therefore, not competent to judge as to the practical results obtained from working under our system of management" (Taylor, 1914, p. 32). This seems a reasonable point to make, but Taylor does not seem to understand the thrust of Cadbury's critique. Cadbury is not doubting the practical achievements of Taylor's approach, but rather criticising the *means* by which those results are being achieved. Quoting liberally from Cadbury's paper, Taylor goes on to question much of what Cadbury says, although he does not provide much in the way of examples to back-up his criticisms of Cadbury. In fairness to Taylor, his reply is relatively short, and does not allow too much space for examples. He does give the example of the Link-Belt Company in Philadelphia, where apparently each day 98% of the workmen achieved the tasks assigned to them, with the result being they received between 30% and 100% higher wages than they would elsewhere. This appears impressive, but recent scholarship does take issue with Taylor's interpretation. Licht, in his chapter in Jacoby (1991), suggests that the management at Link-Belt were innovating in a range of paternalistic programmes at the same time as they were using Taylor's approach. This would not have pleased Taylor, as he was much opposed to paternalistic approaches. This interpretation by Licht was shared by Kathy Burgess in Daniel Nelson's *A Mental Revolution: Scientific Management Since Taylor*:

> An examination of the firm's industrial relations from 1900 to 1940 underscores the limited impact of scientific management in an important area of industrial management: contrary to their statements, Link-Belt executives never relied on scientific management to promote industrial peace. The company's labor management strategy had combined trade association and corporate welfare activities with Taylorism from the beginning, and after World War 1, scientific management became even less important in defining the relations between employer and employees (Burgess, 1992, p. 130).

Taylor goes on to contest Cadbury's views about workers suffering from monotony of work under scientific management, instead suggesting all workers involved in their system of working received training to do higher and more interesting work, and, as a result, received higher wages. This seems difficult to substantiate, given that the whole purpose of scientific management is to reduce each operation to its simplest task. Taylor concluded his defence of scientific management by asserting that his system had effectively created a

code of laws which were binding on workers as well as management (Taylor, 1914, p. 35). This implies relatively peaceful industrial relations in the workplace, but is hardly consistent with an earlier comment:

> One of the marked characteristics of the shop working under our system is that there are, every day, more complaints made on the part of the workmen that the management has failed to do its duty in some respect than there are complaints on the part of the management of failure on the part of the workmen (Taylor, 1914, p. 34).

Taylor even goes on to make a further comment applauding scientific management as being "complete democracy in the management of industrial establishments" (Taylor, 1914, p. 34), which seems completely at odds with the widespread opposition to scientific management that was emerging in the United States by 1913. Labour unions began opposing Taylor's methods strongly from 1911 onwards (Hoxie, 1915), and a US House of Representatives committee investigated scientific management, concluding that it gave production managers too much uncontrolled power. Furthermore, the Senate banned the use of scientific management at Watertown Arsenal, one of Taylor's principal sites of study (Frey, 1916). To conclude on Taylor, his arguments appeared less persuasive to British employers. The ideas gained less of a foothold in British industry, probably because they failed to recognise the quite different industrial climate and culture in Britain, an important pre-requisite for introducing any new industrial policy or approach.

The next reported contributor to the symposium was J A Hobson, here referred to as the author of *The Industrial System* (1909) and *Work and Wealth* (1914). Hobson begins by agreeing with most of Cadbury's criticisms of scientific management, in particular the view that the net effect of scientific management will be to damage the worker as a human being due to overwork and loss of initiative, and, further, to furnish no real security for the worker (Hobson, 1914, p. 35). However, Hobson does go on to query whether most employers following Cadbury's work practices might be greedier than Cadbury, and prefer to look for increased profit. Given competitive pressures on employers under capitalism, Hobson makes a fair point. He goes on to suggest that the expensive schemes followed by Cadbury could only be implemented by firms screened *from the full force of competition*, and therefore earning surplus profits (Hobson, 1914, p. 36). It is difficult to know whether this criticism might apply in some areas of manufacturing, but this did not appear to be the case in the confectionary trades at this time. In 1913, the largest chocolate manufacturer in Britain was Fry's, and they were one of the largest employer's in the country at the time. Cadbury's were not far behind, and Rowntree's were also doing very well in this period. All three firms were in competition with each other, practised various forms of employee benevolence, and, of course, were Quaker firms. It seems that Hobson was a little wide of the mark with this criticism of Cadbury, although Fry's did overstretch themselves later, and merged with Cadbury in 1919.

Next up was G D H Cole, described in the report as author of *The World of Labour*. Cole was a well-known advocate of guild socialism, and was therefore unlikely to find much merit in either Taylor's scientific management or Cadbury's early form of pluralism. A flavour of Cole's perspective is found in his opening statement:

> Under modern factory conditions the worker is treated purely as a raw material of industry. Labour is bought in the cheapest market, and, when high wages are paid, they are justified solely on the ground of increased efficiency. But the worker is not the raw material of industry, and labour ought not to be bought or sold as a commodity (Cole, 1914, p. 36).

Whilst Cole goes on to acknowledge the importance of efficiencies in the workplace, he doubts that scientific management is the answer. In particular, he is sceptical of the value of much vocational selection. He believed that where it was successful, it was as much to do with common sense as with scientific method. But he did support vocational training at its best, and agreed with Cadbury on this. Cole's concluding comment is to reiterate his support for an alternative economic system. He recognised that 'enlightened' employers like Cadbury might have a future, but a radical change in the economic system was the only real answer, and, for him at least, he thought scientific management and the excessive pursuit of profit by employers might bring about its own downfall (Cole, 1914, p. 37).

Walter Hazell, described as Chairman of Hazell, Watson and Viney Limited, of Aylesbury and London, was generally supportive of Cadbury's comments, going on to suggest that all large employers with a conscience ought to read Cadbury's *Experiments in Industrial Organization*. Hazell takes an interesting line of argument. Given the large increases in production reported by Taylor, along with the significantly reduced staffing levels, he concluded that "the old management must have been exceptionally lax and incompetent even for rule-of-thumb methods" (Hazell, 1914, p. 38). However, he does recognise that new technology and new managerial methods will produce unemployment, but does not agree with Cadbury that the worker might be permanently injured by this. Instead, he gives the example of new methods in the building industry which might reduce costs, ultimately leading to more employment in the building industry and more houses being built, particularly in rural areas. This simplistic example does not fully explore the difficulties that are likely to present themselves, for example costs associated with unemployment, re-training, and a shift in labour from urban to rural areas, etc. Nevertheless, it is an interesting argument, and seems to be a forerunner of Schumpeter's 'creative destruction' theory. He even goes on to add that the monotony that is likely to emerge from forms of scientific management will produce more roles for administrators, organisers and supervisors. In conclusion, Hazell recognised problems associated with the modern forms of manufacturing, but equally recognised there were no easy answers. He believed that both Cadbury's and Taylor's approaches deserved further study, but his final comment seemed to lean more in the direction of Cadbury than Taylor. He suggested the systems

> …should not be worked for greater output only, but also for the social and material benefit of the employees. To secure these ends for them there is needed the continued power of collective bargaining and the development of the Trade Boards Act, enlightened public opinion, and last but not least, employers who realise that it is a duty and a pleasure to make the well-being of their employees their main aim and not merely to work for their own profit (Hazell, 1914, p. 39).

The company of Hans Renold Ltd., of Manchester had two contributors to the symposium: C G Renold and W H Jackson. The papers do not describe their differing roles in the company, but C G Renold was the son of the originator of the company, (still often referred to colloquially as 'Renold's chains'), so was presumably a significant player in the company. Both contributors make similar points, although in different ways. Renold's is the more comprehensive. He shares with Cadbury the concern of increased monotony for the worker, but is more optimistic for the eventual outcome. He feels the simplified job will provide opportunities for the less skilled worker, and the skilled worker who now finds the work less skilled, can instead find new opportunities in the better grades of work associated with inspection, machine-setting, leading hands, etc. This transference and promotion of workers from one kind of work to another seems ambitious, but could at least be part of the solution. He believed too that increased production, and consequent demand, created the need for more labour, not less. On balance, the company seemed to be more positive about scientific management than Cadbury, although Renold acknowledged the important role that needed to be played by workers' organisations, and believed their bargaining power would increase as a result. In conclusion, he praised Cadbury's success in achieving a balance between the employer and employee:

> He is to be congratulated on having seen the dangers of the system and provided for them adequately, both by throwing the settlement of terms of work open to free discussion with his employees, and by establishing a comprehensive system of education which provides a ladder of promotion for those who choose to use it (Renold, 1914, p. 41).

C Bertrand Thompson of Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration contributed to the debate after the symposium had taken place, and his paper was included in a later issue of *The Sociological Review*. His contribution was the lengthiest of all, and is worthy of some comment. He began by summarising what he considered to be the main points made by the other contributors to the debate. These amounted to a list of five criticisms: a) the system 'drives' the worker, b) the work becomes monotonous, c) scientific management destroys initiative, skill and judgement, d) the system does not resolve the disparities in wealth that exist in society, and e) scientific management is incompatible with organised labour. Having done this, he then goes on to make something of a defence of them. First Thompson suggests the critics are wrong about 'driving' the worker. For him, the critics are confusing strenuous work with efficiency. He suggests scientific management is not about doing the same thing faster, but rather doing a

different and easier thing to achieve the same end (Thompson, 1914, p. 21). In his reply, Cadbury was quite short and to the point. He believed he fully understood the difference between strenuous work and efficiency, but remained convinced it was impossible to prevent workpeople overdriving themselves. He made the point that as scientific management became more widespread, the intensity of competition would make it inevitably a system of work intensification. Cadbury reinforced the point by suggesting that no amount of 'enlightened' management would be able to avoid being drawn into such practices, because its central objective would remain the pursuit of profit (Cadbury, 1914, p. 46).

Second, Thompson makes the odd observation that monotony is something we all fear, yet rarely experience. This seems to fly in the face of the experiences of most workers on production lines, or indeed most types of routine work. He tries to enforce his point by differentiating between the active and inactive mind. Apparently, the active mind will always have interesting thoughts that will counteract the monotony, and those with inactive minds are protected from monotony by the very inactive minds they possess (Thompson, 1914, p. 22). This indicates, to me at least, that Thompson had little understanding of the shop floor, and even less experience of it. This cold and unfeeling description of the worker is entirely consistent with some of Taylor's language. In his reply, Cadbury appears a little curt. He drew upon his experience of the workplace to display a more optimistic insight into the worker:

> ...my experience with the average unskilled labourer, both boys and girls, is that they show a decided power of mental development when their education proceeds on good lines. It is just because I refuse to accept the division of the workpeople into types of mentally alert and mentally inactive, that I do not agree with any argument based upon such a supposed division. And any system that tends to make such types is anti-social (Cadbury, 1914, p. 46).

Third, Thompson rejected the view that scientific management destroyed initiative, skill and judgement. He did this by rejecting the idea that extending knowledge by the exercise of imagination, ingenuity, foresight and courage was available to any other than a small minority of exceptional human beings. "The truth is that what people usually mean by initiative is the inability or the unwillingness to accept advice and instruction; and there is no question that scientific management does not encourage this type of initiative" (Thompson, 1914, pp. 24-5). This comment, typical of enthusiasts for scientific management like Thompson, provides deep insight into why those like Cadbury were of the view that scientific management was an inhumane approach to organising in the workplace. Cadbury had effectively already answered Thompson on these matters, when he referred to the way in which workers at the Bournville plant were given the opportunity to enhance and develop their skills through further education and vocational training, both avenues being available to Cadbury workers. These were designed so as to encourage the worker to develop their initiative, skill and judgement, not destroy it.

Thompson's fourth point was something of a red herring, as Cadbury agreed that scientific management had never been designed to bring about a distribution of wealth. Cadbury had never suggested this was the case, although he was quite firmly opposed to the way in which the industrial system created rich and poor. For Cadbury there was a need for the worker to have a voice in the workplace as well as a vote in a political democracy. And this brought him on to Thompson's final point, that of trade unionism. Cadbury had already engaged with Taylor's views on trade unionism, but as Thompson supported the views of Taylor, and, for that matter, Gantt, who was an enthusiast for scientific management, and mentioned in the papers by both Taylor and Thompson, Cadbury set about reinforcing his point:

> I have pointed out above (and in this I am dealing with Mr Thompson's last point [i.e. trade unionism]) that Mr Taylor and Mr Gantt have been definitely hostile to trade-unionism and collective bargaining, and that they seemed to imagine that their system would result in the elimination of trade-unionism, for the simple reason that they provided a stronger motive of self-interest for the workman. That this is a correct description of their attitude Mr Thompson admits, and when he points out that in some instances the policy and ideas of Mr Taylor on this point are not followed, and that the system is not necessarily antagonistic to collective bargaining, he does not answer my criticisms of Mr Taylor, but justifies them (Cadbury, 1914, p. 47).

Cadbury goes on to conclude that he saw no reason why the system advocated by Taylor and others could not be amended "with and through the assistance of trade unions". Cadbury's belief in bringing about efficiencies in the workplace remained central to his workplace approach, so he would not have been opposed to considering forms of organisation that improved workplace practice, including scientific management. But he demonstrated he was fundamentally opposed to the harsh and unfeeling approach that typified much scientific management practice. If trade unions were prepared to consider improved versions of scientific management, versions that took full account of workers as human beings with feelings and personalities, and were given a voice in its introduction and implementation, he would participate more co-operatively. But he was also clear in making his final point, suggesting that any other policy pursued in the UK would be "foredoomed to failure" (Cadbury, 1914, p. 47).

To conclude this section on the symposium, it is worthwhile noting Cadbury's desire to not simply engage in debate, but also reply to his detractors. He was clearly very firm in his views, and, despite Taylor suggesting Cadbury had not studied workplaces that had introduced scientific management 'successfully', Cadbury had gone one better, and designed a factory system he considered more humane and participative, one that respected workers as human beings, but also one that believed in giving those workers a voice in the running of the company. That was through trade union representation and collective bargaining, as well as works council type arrangements that began emerging in

the company well before Whitley. This did not in any way conflict with trade union representation, and that was made clear in the works council documentation. Trade unions continued to operate as well as, and alongside, works councils. Even at this very early stage in the twentieth century, in the Cadbury system we see the beginnings of an approach that seemed to incorporate elements of 'sophisticated modern' or 'neo' pluralism, particularly in its provision of a range of welfare benefits and leisure facilities, as well as its emphasis on trade union representation and collective bargaining (Ackers, 2002).

Concluding comments on Cadbury's written work

As I move on to the next section, and say something about 'theory into practice', it is worthwhile reminding ourselves of Cadbury's development as a management thinker. First, Cadbury seemed to be stimulated into doing something for women in the workplace. But not *just* the workplace, and this is an important point to make. Certainly he was aware of the privations they suffered in the workplace, but he was also conscious that addressing these in isolation was to run the risk of missing important information. As a result, he paid for and organised the Birmingham field research that became the material for his first book, *Women's Work and Wages* (1906). This looked at women not simply in the workplace, but also in their domestic and home-based relationships too, and is a comprehensive study of working class women and their lives in Birmingham in the early years of the twentieth century. This stimulated further interest in the role of women in the workplace, and his next book, *Sweating* (1907), was a direct attack upon the sweated trades in Britain, mainly the preserve of women workers. Alongside this work, Cadbury was busy in the family firm 'experimenting' with new and different ways of doing things in the workplace. By the time of the publication of his second book there were already plenty of new innovations that had been introduced at Cadbury, including a range of welfare benefits, recreational facilities, and a voice for employees through suggestion schemes and shop committees. More was to come, and the full range of initiatives was outlined in his book *Experiments in Industrial Organization* (1912). As John Child said (and mentioned earlier), this read much like a 1960s Personnel Management handbook. The culmination of Cadbury's work was to be found a few years later in the introduction of Works Council's in the company, and this seemed to round-off his contribution to early British management practice and thought, although he did take time out in 1913 to contest the scientific management philosophy of F W Taylor. Together, these initiatives demonstrated Cadbury to be a management thinker of some note, and well ahead of his contemporaries.

The importance of Cadbury as a management thinker is demonstrated by his ability to put his thoughts into practice in the family company. This was a privilege denied many other writers of the day, but had the great advantage of anchoring Cadbury in the real world of manufacturing. His ideas were not based on what he had read, heard or discussed, but on hard reality. His ideas were not abstractions, but grounded in empirical evidence. This places him well ahead of some of his more learned colleagues who had read much, but

lacked his first-hand experience. Much of value can still be gleaned from a careful reading of Cadbury today, but these texts also have to be read in the context of his own role as a manager at the Cadbury company. The next section provides examples of this 'theory to practice' side of Cadbury, by giving a more detailed description of the Works Councils in practice.

Section Three - Theory into Practice

Introduction

A range of commentators have praised Cadbury for introducing forms of industrial participation early in the development of the company (Williams, 1931, Child, 1968, Windsor, 1980). References can be found to suggestions committees, shop committees and works councils, all of which had representation from the employees. It is, then, all the more surprising that little has been written on the detail of these forms of industrial participation. It was one thing for the family directors to say that they were keen on 'democratising' decision-making within the company, but another to demonstrate its implementation in practice.

This chapter will attempt to remedy that omission, by making use of the Cadbury archive material leading up to the introduction and first year of the Works Councils. The Works Councils were the effective culmination of the Cadbury approach to participation, having introduced suggestions schemes and shop committees earlier, as well as recognising trade unions for collective bargaining purposes. This counters any suggestion that the Works Councils were simply a reaction to the Whitley proposals, and will involve some scrutiny of the background to the Works Councils, and the range of employee involvement schemes prior to the Works Councils being introduced in 1918. This will be followed by a consideration of the drafting committees and their deliberations in preparing for the Works Councils, ending with a look at the work of the first year of the Works Councils, by examining the minutes. First, however, we need to revisit briefly what was happening in Birmingham and the country as a whole on this front.

The year 1918 was obviously important in that this was the end of the First World War. The armistice was negotiated for 11am on 11th November 1918. Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, was hailed as the man who won the war, and so he decided to capitalise on his popularity by going to the country. The election was called on 14 November and the election took place on 14 December, not leaving much time for campaigning. The coalition that Lloyd George had assembled to fight the war in 1916 was now asking to be given the job of securing a lasting peace. Whatever faults Lloyd George might have had, he won the election with an overwhelming majority. The result was a massive landslide in favour of the coalition comprising primarily the Conservatives and Coalition liberals. The election was also notable as the first election that allowed all women over the age of 30, and all men over the age of 21, to vote. Previously all women and many poor men had been excluded from voting. In Birmingham a new weekly newspaper, the *Sunday Mercury*, had been launched on 29 December, and full coverage was given to the election results. Lloyd George had a 235 seat majority, and was in a clear position to stamp his authority on the coalition of 334 Unionists, 127 Liberal and 10 Labour MPs (*Sunday Mercury*, 29 December, 1918, p. 1).

Still, there remained the question of the workers and their demand for a return to pre-war conditions and rules, including the role played by trade unions. The new shop stewards' movement that was emerging at this time was mentioned in the *Sunday Mercury*, and its coverage was wide-ranging and given equal prominence with that of the election results, suggesting the resolution of workers' demands was a key issue for the government to address. The newspaper reports included sections on Wages and Prices, The Reduction in the Working Week, Rank and File Democracy, and a question was posed about Shop Stewards Committees: 'Are they Soviets?' a clear reference to the Russian Revolution of 1917. The whole article highlighted the criticisms of trade union officials and their executives voiced by the rank and file, suggesting that they were removed from the day-to-day experiences of the ordinary trade union member, and that shop stewards and workers committees were a more democratic and representative form of leadership, one based on the shop floor. The article went on to highlight practical alternatives to the present system of trade unions run by their executives and full-time officials. Direct representation from workshops to committees was one such suggestion, direct action, including the vesting of control of trade union policy in the hands of the rank and file, another. The overall objectives being the ever-increasing control of workshop conditions, the regulation of terms of employment, and the organisation of workers on a class basis. This was clearly a set of radical demands, and its publication in the Birmingham *Sunday Mercury* implies that this kind of demand, if not commonplace, was at least widely understood to be a reasonable set of demands in the aftermath of the war effort. Tom Dingley, a trade unionist of some 20 years, is quoted in support of the new shop steward movement:

> ....the old guard has not only served its purpose and outlived its usefulness but is now positively reactionary and maintained not in the interests of the workers supporting it but in the interests of the capitalist class.
> (*Sunday Mercury*, 29 December, 1918, p. 1)

The demands of the workers in Birmingham were shared by many others around the country, and it was something employers and the government were going to have to address. The expectations of hundreds of thousands of armed forces personnel returning to Civvy Street was not something that could be ignored. The promises of decent jobs, security of employment and 'homes fit for heroes' had raised expectations, and the government was expected to make good on its promises.

(a) Shop Committees and Works Councils

First, some background to the Works Councils. As already mentioned, the first way in which employees within Cadbury were given something of a voice was through the suggestion committees. These were started by the company in 1902, and provided for some level of involvement by the employees (Williams, 1931). Viewed from the early years of the twenty-first century, this seems relatively modest. Even so, this was rare at the time, employers usually defending their decision-making powers with vigour. But Cadbury took

the initiative in this venture, seemingly wanting to provide employees with a voice that had some practical benefit for both themselves and the company. Shop committees were introduced in 1905, giving further voice to the workforce, but were mainly appointed by the company from among the foremen and forewomen employees. Even so, there were some members of the committees elected from the workforce themselves. From this we can see that elements of worker voice were finding their way into decision-making forums in the company from the beginnings of the twentieth century. These were to take something of a leap forward in 1918, in the aftermath of the War.

But first we should remember that immediately prior to the First World War, there was large scale industrial disruption around the country (Callaghan, 2012). This occurred alongside a significant growth in trade union membership. In the immediate post-war period, government, the world of business and those in positions of authority were only too conscious of this as well as keen to ensure there would be no repeat of the widespread industrial upheaval. The war had involved high levels of co-operation between government, employers and employees (including trade unions), and most wanted this to continue. But the onus was on government to create and maintain a framework or platform that would help encourage and promote high levels of co-operation. They were the only authority that could lay claim to the 'national interest', and they were the only body that could project a position of independence and impartiality. The result was the Whitley Committee, a body that was set up by government to provide workers with a voice in the workplace, enabling them to control the conditions under which their work was carried out. J H Whitley, the Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, chaired the committee, and issued its report on Joint Standing Industrial Councils in March 1917. Its recommendations were for the setting up of national, local and works councils, each having representation from both employer and employee. The government supported the report, and adopted its proposals as part of its policy on the work of industrial reconstruction (Middlemas, 1979).

Similar ideas to these had long been promoted by the directors at Cadbury, and they were voiced once again at a Conference of Foremen at the Bournville works in October, 1917 (*BWM*, December, 1917, p. 311). At the conference were Barrow, Edward and George Cadbury Junior, all directors of the company. George Cadbury Junior presided over the Foreman's Conference, but perhaps the most telling comment was that of Edward Cadbury, reported in the *Bournville Works Magazine*:

> In this twentieth century all were probably agreed that the time had come for the democratising of industries. The difficulty was how to carry it gradually into effect, modern industry being such a complicated machine. He recalled that in 1912 a Shop Committee had been instituted for the Card Box Department at the works, where about 350 pieceworkers were employed doing various kinds of work. The Committee elected a secretary and had met from time to time since. They had met himself on the question of war bonuses and the rises in prices. The first negotiation with the committee had been a wages negotiation. The advantages had been

> mutual, and it had been possible to prevent what otherwise might have been difficulties. In short, the firm had been carrying out to a large extent the recommendations of the Whitley report (*BMW*, December, 1917, p. 312).

Good relationships between employer and employee were emphasised in the discussion that followed, and, along with the Edward Cadbury comment, provides us with a good idea of the mood that prevailed in the company at the time. A second conference followed. This provided for the setting up of a provisional committee representative of the staff and work people, who, in turn, arranged for the election of representatives to a further committee whose responsibility it was to draft the Works Council scheme. Throughout, the process appears to have been democratic, as the scheme was submitted back to the employees for their approval before being implemented. The committee consisted of sixteen persons, eight of whom represented the firm and eight the employees. The employees had been divided up into eight groups, each group to appoint its own representative "to discuss the question of setting up a scheme for Bournville and Stirchley Works on the lines of the Whitley Report" (*BMW* January, 1918, p. 9). The election of the workers' representatives took place in January, and along with the firm's representatives, which included two directors, William Cadbury and George Cadbury Junior, set about jointly drafting a Works Council scheme.

Once completed, the drafting committee asked George Cadbury Junior to write out a general outline of the proposals (dated 9th February, 1918). These written proposals were also reported in the March issue of the *Bournville Works Magazine* (pp. 70-71). In introducing the proposals, George Cadbury prefaced his remarks with a quote from his brother Edward's book of 1912, *Experiments in Industrial Organization*:

> The supreme principle has been the belief that business efficiency and the welfare of the employees are but different sides of the same problem. Character is an economic asset; and business efficiency depends not merely on physical conditions of employees, but on their general attitude and feeling towards the employer. The test of any scheme of factory organization is the extent to which it creates and fosters the atmosphere and spirit of co-operation and goodwill, without in any sense lessening the loyalty of the worker to his own class and its organisations.

Although a passage already mentioned (p. 8), the key point to emphasise here is that a director like Edward Cadbury was already *anticipating* something like the Whitley proposals some years earlier. In other words, he was both an innovator and forerunner, rather than a mere follower, of events. Going on to provide some detail of the drafting committees proposals, George Cadbury Junior identified five specific areas that should be considered by a Works Council: Wages, Suggestions, Education, General Health and Working Conditions and Discipline. The question of wages was an interesting one because it was an area in which employers were usually reluctant to cede any responsibility to other parties. However, George Cadbury Junior was quite specific in his comments:

> ....we must exercise great care here, as the primary bodies for establishing minimum rates of wages with the employers are the Trade Unions and the Trade Boards....We must, therefore, lay down as the first principle that nothing must be done to contravene Trade Union rules or customs, without consulting the Union concerned.

As we have already seen, this desire to defend and promote high levels of trust and co-operation with trade unions was clearly a central concern for the Cadbury family and its board members, and is echoed again here.

As noted earlier, the suggestions schemes were the first company initiatives that gave employees something of a voice in company affairs. Unfortunately, the schemes had been suspended during the war, but the schemes would return after the war, and the company was looking forward to their re-introduction. Education for employees had received long standing support from the firm, and it was unsurprising that this should be something that found its way on to Works Council agendas. Cadbury appeared keen to have an employee voice involved with the further development of the education schemes in the company, as it had, to date, been something of an employer initiative. General health and working conditions had long been a concern of the company, hence their introduction of health and welfare initiatives over many years. George Cadbury was keen that the employees should not see these as a 'top-down' approach and once again was quite specific about the areas of 'mutual interest': a) Health and cleanliness in the workshops, b) Accidents and their causes and prevention, c) Dealing with hospital information, d) Catering and e) Holidays and the works holiday scheme. The final area to be a Works Council agenda item was discipline. Discipline in the workplace had long been a cause of dispute between employers and employees in many workplaces, and notions of fairness and justice tended to rank high in the minds of most employees. The firm made it clear that they were keen to involve employee representation when considering issues of discipline, and in doing so countered any suggestion that discipline was purely an employer matter. They felt it would help to bring about efficient delivery of justice, as well as ensuring decisions were seen as fair. Clearly there was some benefit to the company here, as it was more likely that employees would accept such forms of peer-judgement as being more balanced and fairer than if simply imposed by the company. This kind of thinking was entirely in keeping with the earlier references to innovative disciplinary practices introduced in the company.

Much of the detail above related to the Men's Drafting Committee, but there was soon to be a Women's Drafting Committee drawing up similar arrangements to those of the men. Even so, Cadbury made it clear that the two Committees would meet together on occasion, usually where there were matters to consider of mutual interest (*BMW*, March 1918, p. 71). Cadbury also reminded employees in his address that the Whitley proposals made provision for National Councils and District Committees, and the company had already made enquiries along those lines. Whilst the Whitley proposals had only made reference to organised industries, Cadbury was of the view that unorganised workplaces would be encouraged to follow suit. Indeed, in the Cadbury company he was committed to the

representation of all employees on the future Shop Committees and Works Councils, not simply those in trade unions. His defence of this arrangement was quite simple: how can a works council represent all workers in the firm or a national council represent all workers in the industry if unorganised workers (often the majority) aren't represented? Cadbury's concluding remarks sum up the company philosophy:

> It has been the aim of the directors to make work at Bournville something more than the mere gaining of the weekly wage. We have endeavoured to realise in all our transactions that we are dealing with men and women, and that there are many things besides wages which are important for the fuller life.....It is my earnest hope that this Council, when set up, will be permeated by this spirit and carry out the duties in such a way that others may wish to set up similar Councils in their businesses (*BMW*, March, 1918, p. 71).

The basic organisation of the Shop Committees, the committees that would represent employer and employee at the level of the shop or department, were quite simple. There was to be a Shop Committee for each shop or department under a foreman. Two or more shops under one foreman were to be grouped together. Within these committees, there was to be one committee member for every ten workers (or part of ten workers), with a minimum of three and a maximum of twelve. A committee member needed to be aged 21 and over or must have worked for the company for five years if under 21. Everyone sixteen and above was entitled to vote in the elections for Shop Committee representatives (*BWM*, March 1918, pp. 71-2). The provisional rules and regulations of the Shop Committees and Works Councils were published in the July issue of the *BWM*, as were the constitutions of the Works Councils, Group Committees and Shop Committees. There was also published an indication of the matters likely to be discussed by the Works Councils: Conditions of Employment, Selection of Workers, Workplace Arrangements, Methods of Remuneration, Hours of Work, Discipline, Relations with Trade Unions, Suggestions, Health and Safety, Benevolent Work, Uniforms, Catering, Education, Library, Recreation, Philanthropic Work, Thrift, Complaints by Customers, Demobilisation Problems. Finally, an outline was provided for the provision of employee elections to positions on the Group Committees and the Works Councils.

Work of the drafting committees continued over the following months, resulting in a meeting held on 31st August with representatives of the works trade unions, giving them the opportunity to make further comment on the proposed rules and regulations of the Shop Committees and Works Councils. George Cadbury Junior spoke at the meeting, as did H J Morcombe, who seems to have emerged as the principal voice of the employees on the drafting committees. Another meeting on 9th September discussed the proposals further, and it was at this meeting that a particularly important suggestion was put forward by Councillor Saunders, a representative of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners. The meeting agreed to adopt his proposal:

> That the suggestion of Councillor Saunders is adopted, and a clause inserted in the book of rules stating that the Directors and Drafting Committee are agreed that there is an advantage in negotiating with organised labour, and that membership of a trade union is desirable (*BWM*, October, 1918, p. 236).

Accepting this kind of suggestion without dissent, provides further evidence of the extent to which the Cadbury Board were prepared to go in encouraging levels of co-operation and participation in the workplace. In a final meeting of the Shop Committee and Women's drafting committees on 22nd October, 1918, to discuss the election, powers and functions of the Council and Committees about to be formed, Edward Cadbury addressed the meeting:

> The Board have been previously entirely responsible for conditions in the factory, and the organisation has been controlled largely from the top. We are now endeavouring to democratise the control of the business by giving all a voice in the management. Those of you who are here to-day have been elected as members of Shop Committees by the girls in your departments. It will now be possible for you to bring forward matters to a representative Council. The scheme for Shop Committees and Works Council has been drawn up by the Drafting Committee: half of which was composed of members elected by yourselves. In this factory we have always endeavoured to work together, and we desire that we may have further co-operation and become more than ever fellow workers.
> (*BWM*, December, 1918, p. 289)

In total, some 500 men and women were elected to represent their fellow workers in some capacity in this democratisation of the Cadbury workplace. This was a major exercise in providing a voice for workers, and demonstrated by example a progressive employer making good use of the Whitley initiative to accelerate progress in the company. Alongside the trade union representation in the company, the Works Council provided another decision-making voice for workers within the workplace. But it is important to emphasise that the company were very careful in ensuring the rules governing the operation of the Works Councils did not in any way conflict with the trade unions role in collective bargaining. Whilst some might question the commitment of many employers to the Whitley experiment, this could not be said of Cadbury. Having spent many employer and employee hours during 1918 discussing and debating the introduction of employee voice in the workplace, the time was now at hand to implement the scheme in earnest. The employee representatives had been elected, and the first meeting took place in November 1918. In parallel with the developments of the drafting committee, a shop stewards movement emerged within the firm. The next section considers this, recognising that Cadbury was not alone in coming to terms with the new shop stewards movement.

The Shop Stewards Movement

Widely throughout the country shop stewards had emerged in the engineering unions, in particular the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE). Their original purpose had been to

organise opposition to the conscription of engineering workers during the First World War. After the Machine Shop and the Confectionary departments appointed shop stewards in November, 1917, the intention being to get the company to recognise them and their role in the workplace, a deputation representing trades and manufacturers in the plant met with George Cadbury Junior on December 11th, 1917:

> Mr George Cadbury Junior announced that the firm had agreed to recognise shop stewards for the engineering departments providing that such are purely advisory, and also that this would not prejudice any future action they may wish to take in regard to the Whitley Report (*BMW*, January, 1918, p. 25).

This recognition seemed to have been given quite willingly, and was designed to encourage further co-operation between employer and employee, although in a purely advisory manner. There was also a reminder that their recognition must not in any way interfere with the future development in the firm of Works Councils along the lines of the Whitley Report. A further meeting of the shop stewards on 13th December decided to ask for the recognition of shop stewards in the whole works. Interestingly, by this time, H J Morcombe, principal voice of the employees on the drafting committee, is writing the shop stewards monthly reports for the *Bournville Works Magazine*. He will be mentioned again later in this section, as he was to become the elected representative for the Machine Shop on the firms Men's Works Council, as well as secretary for the employee's side of the Men's Works Council.

By the time of the next meeting of the shop stewards committee on 10th January, 1918, many departments within the works were now represented, numbering 54 stewards in all (*BMW*, February, 1918, p. 49). A list of instructions was issued for shop stewards, with the suggestion that more information could be found in the pamphlet *The Workers Committee: An Outline of the Principles and Structure* by J T Murphy of the Sheffield Workers Committee. Murphy was a member of the ASE and was to become a founder member of the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1920, holding a range of Party positions before resigning from the Party in 1932. This appears to be radical stuff, and suggests Cadbury was happy to support the work of committed radicals as long as he was in sympathy with their motives. The shop stewards movement at Cadbury seemed to develop quickly because the report in the March issue of the *Bournville Works Magazine* was comprehensive, and covered a range of issues of relevance to trade unionists in the company. First, *The Labour Gazette*, the Board of Trade publication issuing information on the cost of living, was taken to task for suggesting the rises in the cost of living were not that bad. Using information provided by the City of Perth Co-operative Society, the report noted that between July 1914 and November, 1917 a basket of food for a family had increased in price by 95.3%. Another report referred to the impending merger of five trade unions to form what eventually became the Transport and General Workers Union. This was applauded as a move in the right direction because it organised mainly non-skilled workers. The Board of Trade *Labour Gazette* was again mentioned in its report on the Whitley Report.

Concern was raised that there was a danger the future industrial arrangements based on the Whitley proposals could end up being something like the much-criticised Conciliation Boards, introduced by the Conciliation Act 1896. The Boards had no powers, and it was difficult for them to establish any level of authority in the field of industrial relations. In the end they failed. This report was quite interesting for some of its Marxian language: '*Society pays for what it considers the socially necessary labour power embodied in a commodity*' (*BMW*, March, 1918, p. 73).

Despite what appears to be widespread support within the company by both employer and employee for the idea of shop stewards, perhaps it was this kind of radical language that raised worries in the minds of some employees. Some decided to put pen to paper to express their concerns. Three such employees had their letters published in the April, 1918, issue of the *Bournville Works Magazine*, querying the value of shop stewards and their committees, preferring the idea of co-operation committees as an alternative (p. 90). Reference was made to the strained relations between Capital and Labour, and the authors felt the shop stewards movement reinforced this tension, rather than promoting co-operation, their preferred option. H J Morcombe, the scribe for the shop stewards movement, usually responded in the 'Correspondence' pages to these kinds of comment, in this case emphasising the need for all viewpoints to be represented, and the benefit to be gained from considering alternative perspectives (*BMW*, April, 1918, p. 90). H J Morcombe continued to provide reports in the *BMW* of the activities of the shop stewards movement in the firm throughout 1918, although their length tended to reduce over the course of the year. Even so, some of the reports were quite comprehensive, the April issue being a good example. Topics reported included 'Shop Committees', 'Trade Union Organisation', Recognition of Stewards as Trade Union Officials', 'Trade Union Executives and the Unofficial Shop Steward Movement', 'The Towns Workers' Committee' and 'The Works Committee and the Directorates of Industry'. These reports demonstrated serious intent, and were clearly intended to maintain the shop stewards' framework as a key element of industrial relations at the firm.

Works Councils

The first meeting of the Men's Works Council took place on Thursday 21st November, 1918, in the Board Room at the works. For the purposes of progressing business, George Cadbury Junior was elected Chair of the meeting. He began by calling upon the Chair of the company, George Cadbury Senior, to address the meeting. On doing so, he emphasised the importance of the Works Council to the business, insisting that the future of the business rested largely in the hands of the Council. He felt that by bringing along the employees to co-operate in the management of the business, that the business would be carried along the right lines (Statement by George Cadbury Senior, Works Council Minutes, November, 1918). George Cadbury Junior, as Chair of the first meeting, noted that the purpose of the first meeting was to put in place the necessary machinery to ensure the Works Council began on

a firm footing. However, he added a personal note of encouragement in support of the whole idea of industrial democracy.

> Democracy was now taking its part in the control of the nations, and it was necessary that workpeople should also take part in the control of industry. Democracy, particularly of industry, was in the experimental stage, and it would be necessary for us to go a step at a time in the work of the Councils. The new Council was really a continuation of the work begun some 18 years ago, commencing with the Suggestion Committee, followed by the Works Committee. It was hoped that open dealings in all matters affecting the interests of the firm and workpeople would be the order of the day instead of secrecy, and that the workpeople would have a voice in the future of the industry in which they were working. The scheme had now been completed, and provided for a direct connection by means of elected representatives from the workpeople up to the Directorate.
> (Works Council Minutes, November, 1918)

This was then followed by an indication of the areas of importance that needed to be addressed by the Works Council in the immediate future. The first such issue was that of demobilisation. This was something that H J Morecombe had already raised under the auspices of the Men's Drafting Committee, and was clearly a matter that was going to challenge the company. All pre-war employees had been promised re-instatement after the war, which was as it should be. However, it would require a certain amount of logistical prowess. Women who had been moved to take up the work of the men who had gone off to war would need to be absorbed back into other areas of the factory, and those men who had been employed on temporary contracts since the beginning of the war would have to be considered too.

Another area of importance was the cost of living. The company believed in high wages, but these had to be accompanied by high levels of efficiency, so as to meet the competition that would be coming from domestic and overseas companies. Working hours per week would be a responsibility of the Works Council, with the specific brief of looking for ways in which the hours in the working week might be reduced. Once again, efficiency would be the necessary pre-requisite. The company was also in the process of merging with Fry's of Bristol (another Quaker company). This would be a matter for consideration by the Works Council, in that the full confidence of all must be maintained, and this could only be done by everyone being in a position of trust. The first meeting of the Men's Council set up a number of Standing Committees to deal with specific issues, committees that would, in effect, shoulder the burden of much of the ongoing work of the Works Council. These committees would cover Health, Welfare and Recreation, Suggestions, Piece Rates and Education. Alongside these Standing Committees, a Finance and General Purposes Committee was formed, consisting of the two Chairs of the Council and the Chairs of the four main Committees. Its purpose was to consider any special matter which might be referred to the Committee by the Council, and which came under the headings of any of the responsibilities allotted to the four main Committees. The same H J Morcombe who was

reporting in the *Bournville Works Magazine* on the activities of the shop stewards committees was appointed the Secretary of the Employees side of the Works Council.

The first meeting of the Women's Works Council took place on Monday 2nd December, 1918. Once again, George Cadbury Senior was on hand to address the new Council and send his best wishes, and took the opportunity to underline Edward's contribution:

> He congratulated the members first of all upon having voted, probably for the first time in their lives. He expressed the hope that in future women would take their rightful place, not only in Parliament, but in business life as well. He was pleased to say that at Bournville the women were not behind the men.....[The directors] wanted to make this factory a happy and comfortable place for those who worked in it.....[and noted] much of the success of the business had been due to the people who had worked loyally and faithfully, as well as to those managing. He mentioned that during the last twenty years the women in the factory had had a very sincere friend in Mr Edward Cadbury.....He was also pleased to see Miss Dorothy Cadbury taking her place there. In the name of the Board and the company he wished the Council every success and prosperity in its work (*BMW*, January, 1919, pp. 22-3).

Edward Cadbury was elected Chair of the Council, the women workers having waived their right to elect a Chair for the first year of the Women's Works Council. It is difficult to know why the women chose to waive their right to an employee Chair, but given that this was probably the first year any of them had been given a vote in anything of significance or importance it is perhaps understandable. The Women's Works Council set up a number of Standing Committees, much like those of the Men's Works Committee: Health, Rules and Discipline, Welfare and Recreation, Suggestions, Education and Works' War Relief. There was also to be a Finance and General Purposes Committee, but the membership of this was to be decided at a later meeting. These first meetings of both Men's and Women's Works Councils had been all about setting up the structure and functioning of the Councils. Rapid progress seems to have been made in these first meetings, indicating strong encouragement and enthusiasm by all in the factory to make speedy progress (Men's Works Council Minutes, November, 1918 and Women's Works Council Minutes, December, 1918).

During the month of January, the Rules and Discipline Committee of the Men's Works Council had spent most of its time gathering and sifting through information on the shorter working week. This information had been gathered from the various bodies and groups within the factory, including Staff and Foremen's Associations and Group and Shop Committees, all being in favour of reducing the working week to 44 or 45 hours. A special meeting of the Council considered the detailed findings, and sent a recommendation to the Board in favour of reducing the working week in the factory. The remaining business of the Men's Works Council dealt with finalising the outstanding arrangements for Committee provision and other organisational matters (Men's Works Council Minutes, January 1919). By February 1919 the Women's Works Council had met a number of times, and both

management and worker representatives had deliberately spent time getting to know and understand each other, as well as familiarising themselves with the work in hand. The Standing Committees had been at work, and a range of issues had already been discussed and debated: Library matters, the Savings Fund and Thrift, Catering, War Bonuses, Suggestions, Accidents, Housing, and appointing a delegate to the Hospital Saturday Fund Committee,. The question of a shorter working week had been brought before the Council on 20th December, 1918, which, in turn, asked for the views of the Staff, Forewomen and Girls' Works Committees, before proceeding further. Once these were known, a special meeting of the Women's Works Council was convened for 25th January, 1919, and their findings were then sent to the Board (*BWM*, February, 1919, p. 36).

Responding to the reports and recommendations of the Men's and Women's Works Councils for a shorter working week, the Board decided to adopt the principle of a shorter working week. However, they declined to work out the possible new arrangements, instead asking the Joint Works Council to sort out the details. The Joint Works Council decided to place three proposals before the workers for their decision by a poll of the works. Proposal A was for three weeks of 45.5 hrs over 5.5 days, and a fourth week of 40.5 hrs over 5 days. Proposal B was for a 5 day week of 44 hrs and proposal C was for a 6 day week of 44 hrs. The Joint Council was in favour of proposal A, and recommended it to the workforce. The poll was taken in the works on Monday 17th February, 1919, and the result declared the following day. Proposal A was chosen. The other main matter that was reported at the Joint Works Council was approval by the Board of the recommendations of the Councils for attendance by members at the Shop and Group Committees, and the Works Councils (*BWM*, March, 1919, p. 62).

Separately, the Men's and Women's Works Councils had each received a gift of £2000 from the Board to be spent developing the educational, recreative and social side of Bournville. The Board would have to agree the decisions before they were implemented, but they emphasised they would apply "the very widest interpretation .....upon the conditions laid down" (*BWM*, March, 1919, p. 63). Housing development on the Bournville estate was also considered as an idea that might be pursued by the Men's Works Council, but it was thought to be a step too far as the costs and difficulties seemed beyond the facility or resources of the Works Council. By the time of the March Works Council meetings, the shorter working week of 44 hours had been confirmed, and further work was being carried out extending the benevolent arrangements at Bournville. The Finance and General Purposes Committees of both Councils had put before the Board proposals for spending the £2000 each had received for educational and ancillary work, and the Men's Council decided government financial support would be necessary before any further progress could be made with the housing issue (*BWM*, April, 1919, p. 94). Within a few months, the Works Councils had established procedures for carrying out their business. The Standing Committees carried out much of the day-to-day work, with the Works Councils formally approving their decisions. Reference was again made to the £2000 being given by

the Board to each of the Works Councils, to be spent on educational and associated purposes. By April, the Works Councils had put forward a number of proposals for its use: a) Benevolent fund arrangements were already in place in the factory, but some of the money to be used to extend this work, b) the forming of a club to encourage and support foreign travel, c) a series of 'high grade' lectures, d) a social club, e) welfare and social work, f) a set of scholarships for both men and women to support them in developing their cultural activities. The use of this money suggests the company was keen on the all-round development of staff, not simply their vocational development.

Throughout the summer months of 1919, the business of the Works Councils seemed to be divided between matters that were pure employee concerns and those of a social nature. There was also a concern for those employees who were going to find it difficult to get away for a holiday. To provide some level of recreation and enjoyment, the Works Councils set about providing concerts during lunch times, and day and summer excursions where possible. But alongside these social matters, more employee-related matters included the sickness benefit scheme. It was acknowledged that the National Health Insurance benefit was totally inadequate, and the firm had agreed to subsidise any scheme the Councils might formulate (Works Council minutes, June, 1919). Housing became something of a priority for the Councils, and the Interim Joint Housing Committee of the Councils had been busy during the summer months. It was hoped that a Bournville Works Housing Society would be formed to facilitate progress. Finance was clearly an issue, as was ensuring that employees at Bournville would be able to obtain priority of tenancy. Nevertheless, the intention was to begin building 32 houses as soon as possible, with the tenancies reserved for members of the Bournville Works Housing Society (*BWM*, July/August, p. 178). A separate housing project that the Women's Works Council was considering was the founding of a hostel on co-operative lines for single women workers at Bournville. The Men's Council, on the other hand, was giving attention to re-organising the ambulance system at the factory, due to the return of so many men from the armed forces. On a lighter note, the Works Councils suggested the annual summer party be replaced this year (1919) by an evening party early in September, due to the time being taken up with the King's visit and peace celebrations over the summer.

By August the sickness benefit scheme was in operation, with about 90% of those employees entitled to join having applied to join (August minutes, 1919). The Works Councils were entitled to claim this as a justifiable success, and a move in the right direction for employee rights in the workplace. Education continued to claim a high place on the Works Council agendas, with the innovation of a Musical Studentship being awarded to one Bournville employee, enabling her to study at the Birmingham and Midlands Institute for two years. Further scholarships were made available for secondary school and adult students. Five secondary school scholarships were made available for the children of employees in Birmingham schools, and six adult scholarships were provided for employees to study at either Fircroft (the College set up by George Cadbury Junior in 1909) or Ruskin

College. Both colleges were adult residential colleges, and seem to have been enthusiastically supported by the Works Councils, as they were also prepared to provide book and travelling expenses, as well as providing financial support for dependent relatives of those receiving the scholarships (*BYM*, September, 1919, p. 208). Education had long been a Cadbury family enthusiasm, and sat firmly within the Quaker tradition of developing the whole person. Another development they would have welcomed was the setting up of a branch of the Birmingham Municipal Bank at Bournville. Thrift was another Quaker trait, and the Cadbury family had already set up a savings fund for employees at the company, so would have been encouraged by this further development (*BYM*, September, 1919, p. 208).

The final months of the year saw activity by the Works Councils intensify. Throughout the months of September, October, November and December, the range of matters considered and discussed included more on education, health and housing, but perhaps the lion's share of business focused on more straightforward employment matters. The Wages Committee had been considering the rates and classification of piece-workers for some time, and the report produced had now been approved by the Board and was available to all employees. Working hours had been considered, and it was decided to continue with the present arrangements until February 1920, when a referendum of the factory would take place, and any new arrangements would be introduced from 1st April, 1920. The sickness allowance was raised for all junior workers, and a new holiday scheme was introduced for women workers. A committee was set up to discover latent talent among workers, so as to help that talent be developed within the workplace and beyond. Another interesting innovation was a scheme for training working men and women at Birmingham University. The course was two days a week for 26 weeks, and included courses on modern industry, commerce, history, science, national and local government and Elizabethan literature! This was designed as part of the all-round development of individuals, but is interesting in that it seems to be well in advance of similar (but more well known) schemes that were developed for Derbyshire and Yorkshire miners at the Universities of Leeds and Sheffield in the 1950s (Barratt-Brown, 1991). Finally, at the beginning of the year it had been decided that the rules and regulations of the Shop, Group and Works Councils would be reviewed at the end of the year to fine tune them and make any necessary amendments. This was done, and was probably an appropriate way to end the year, as the *Bournville Works Magazine* reported:

> A number of alterations have been proposed, and these, in accordance with rule, are being posted throughout the factory. Considering the magnitude of the work carried on by the Council and its Committees, we think it will be agreed that the Drafting Committee must have done its work extremely well, for there are few alterations of any real importance to be put forward. Careful examination will show that the alterations suggested are mainly administrative, and there are very few which deal with questions of principle (*BWM*, December, 1919, p. 271).

Conclusions

What can we conclude from this first year of the Works Councils and their work? First, it is important to note that the Works Councils were not simply the outcome of the Whitley proposals (Smith, Child and Rowlinson, 1990). There had been a long tradition of employee involvement in decision-making at the Bournville works, and this had not been accidental. As we saw in the previous section, Edward Cadbury had mooted the idea of a suggestions committee involving young workers as early as 1899 (Board Minutes, 1899), and a suggestions committee actually began in the works in 1902. This was followed later by shop committees. Neither of these two committees seemed to have elected representatives, at least in the beginning, as the directors appear to have made the appointments. There was no doubting this fell well short of the elected representation preferred by employees, and no doubt it could be suggested the staff representatives were selected because of their employer sympathies. This we do not know. However, whatever its shortcomings, it was the beginning of some form of employee voice, and its introduction in the early years of the twentieth century was well in advance of even those firms who participated in the Whitley scheme.

One of the problems with looking at these early years of Cadbury is that there appears to be little evidence in the archives on trade union matters. This is confirmed by Williams (1931), but he does suggest negotiations took place between individual directors and the trade unions up to about 1909, with the first written records of an agreement being one between the National Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks in 1911 (Williams, 1931, p. 110). The company always paid above the minimum rates agreed between employers' associations and the trade unions, and there appears to be no available evidence to suggest otherwise. But how would these trade unions have regarded the Works Councils introduced by Cadbury? Once again, there appears nothing to suggest the trade unions were fundamentally opposed to them at Cadbury, and the evidence that we have on the shop stewards movement operating at Bournville seems to support this. As already noted, the shop stewards were recognised by Cadbury at the end of 1918, and the editor of the *Bournville Works Magazine* gave the shop stewards the opportunity to report on their activities in the magazine throughout 1919. This was done, and the reports were always provided by H J Morcombe. Morcombe was clearly a shop steward, presumably representing workers in the Machine Shop, as he also represented the Machine Shop on the Men's Works Council. He was also the secretary for the employees' side of the Men's Works Council, and replied on behalf of the shop stewards movement to any questioning of the shop stewards movement through the pages of the *Bournville Works Magazine*. Given that Morcombe appears to have been quite comfortable in holding both shop steward and Works Council roles, it is reasonable to assume that he saw no conflict between them. The employees' side of the Men's Works Council apparently saw no problem either, as they made him secretary of their group. All of this suggests that, although many trade unions in today's climate are sceptical of the role of Works Councils and their potential to undermine

the role of unions in the workplace (in some cases with good reason), this was not the case in Cadbury in 1919.

A third factor worth noting is that whilst the company had something like 8000 employees in the company in 1919 (and this was about to expand by another 2000 over the next few years), the company still seemed to operate with something of a family-feel to it. This is confirmed by the sorts of matters that found their way on to the Works Council agendas, e.g. concerts, excursions, summer fetes, a hostel for single female employees. This appears extraordinary given the number of employees, but does say something about the Cadbury family and the way in which they endeavoured to maintain that familial spirit within the company, long after many other companies of a similar size would have given up. But it would be wrong to conclude that this was merely or simply paternalism. Instead, the evidence suggests it was an example of the employees being given a genuine voice within the company, one that allowed them to make a significant contribution to the company and its development over the years. It was an opportunity that the employees (including trade unionists) appeared to value, and one that they clearly exercised to the full. Whilst the Cadbury family still retained final decision-making powers in areas of finance and overall strategy, it should be noted that this was not necessarily something that trade unions disagreed with. There has always been a strong section of the trade union movement averse to any involvement in 'management' in the workplace, preferring to retain their role as independent representatives of the workers, content to influence management decision-making via collective bargaining (Unite Rule Book, 2019, Rule 2 'Objects').

The next section develops this idea of the relationship between employees and employers, by making reference to the first two Quaker Employers' Conferences (in 1918 and 1928), before finishing with some reference to the Cadbury company.

(b) Employee Relations and the Quaker Employers Conferences of 1918 and 1928

Introduction

This section will focus on the extent to which Quaker employers were prepared to listen to the 'Voice of Labour' when introducing labour reforms in the early twentieth century. The early part of this section will make brief reference to the beginnings of Quakerism, noting that early Quaker employers were already putting forward suggestions and ideas that would help improve the working lives of their employees. This is followed by reference to the first Quaker Employers Conference of 1918, and its particular focus on the relationship between employer and employee. Both the 1918 and 1928 conferences provide good examples of how Quaker employers were seriously engaging with employees and their representatives at this time.

The 1918 Conference could be characterised as focusing only on the relationship between employer and employee, but for our purposes the focus will be more specific.

After noting the comments of the Conference Chair, Arthur Rowntree, maximum attention will be given to the 'Voice of Labour', and the way in which the Conference replied to that voice through its session on the 'The Status of the Worker'. The 1928 Conference will be given less attention, but will help illustrate the extent to which the themes developed at the 1918 Conference remained central to the 1928 Conference. Cadbury has already provided plenty of examples to illustrate how one Quaker company set about creating a platform for the voice of labour within its organisation, confirming Cadbury as being at the forefront of innovative industrial relations practice in the early twentieth century.

Unfortunately, Edward Cadbury was unable to attend the first Quaker Employers Conference in 1918, due to illness. Nevertheless, the Conference was held at Woodbrooke, a former Cadbury home in Bournville, and much of the agenda had already received some attention in Edward Cadbury's book of 1912, *Experiments in industrial Organization*. Four Cadbury family members were there, all directors of Cadbury companies, and the delegates were even afforded a visit to the Bournville works during the Conference. William Cadbury was not recorded as speaking at the Conference, but all other Cadbury members gave a paper or spoke. It is fair to say that although Edward Cadbury was not there in person, his voice was still being heard, albeit vicariously. However, Edward was at the 1928 Conference and provided the welcome to delegates, as well as making contributions to discussion and debate. Reference will be made to this later in this section.

My analysis reinforces the argument that Quaker employers, and Cadbury in particular, were early examples of the pluralist approach to employee relations. As already noted, pluralist employers recognise competing interests in the workplace, but that those competing interests rest alongside shared interests. Where competing interests come to the fore, such employers believe they can be overcome or resolved through developing appropriate mechanisms for decision-making. Central to pluralism is collective bargaining, where trade unions represent employees, and negotiations take place with the employer to reach agreement. Throughout this section reference will be made to the ways in which Quaker employers were approaching their responsibilities in the early twentieth century, as well as the workplace practices implemented by Cadbury, which suggest that overall they were early examples of employers with a pluralist perspective.

Events leading up to the 1918 conference

Individual Quaker employers have long attempted to run their businesses on the basis of their religious faith. Consequently, over the centuries we can find insightful comments that Quakers have made relating to the world of work and employment. As early as the seventeenth century, Thomas Lawson, who was a Monthly Meeting clerk as well as being employed by Margaret Fell, addressed parliament on the matter. In his 1660 *Appeal to the Parliament concerning the Poor that there may be not a beggar in England*, he set out a platform of labour offices or exchanges in each parish so as to help provide employment for those unemployed (Lawson, 1660). Later in the century, the more well-known Yorkshire

Friend, John Bellers, put forward the idea of 'Colleges of Industry', self-sufficient working communities. Demonstrating his understanding of the link between the social and the economic, Bellers suggested a reasonable standard of living should be provided for all, including education and health care. Welfare would be provided where necessary, and seasonal and structural employment would become more manageable as a result (Clarke, 1987). Bellers was sufficiently forward thinking to attract the plaudits of Karl Marx, who mentions him several times in *Capital*, and goes on to describe him as "a veritable phenomenon in the history of political economy" (Anderson, 2019, p. 154). Bellers can also be found in the current issue of *Quaker Faith and Practice*: "The poor without employment are like rough diamonds, their worth is unknown" (*Quaker Faith and Practice*, 2015, Section 23.68). The evidence suggests that since the seventeenth century, a number of other Quaker employers have also implemented progressive workplace practices (Windsor, 1980, Campbell Bradley, 1987).

However, these attempts at providing something of a Quaker approach to commercial and industrial matters were never brought together in anything like a collective programme. This was to change during the First World War. There had been a range of dissent and disruption in industry in the period leading up to the First World War. Trade union membership had increased significantly, and strike action had become quite widespread (Callaghan 2012). Although War brought about something of a temporary truce, the War itself seemed to be a catalyst that provoked a change in thinking of both employer and employee. Relationships needed to change from that of 'master' and 'servant', to one of joint effort and common endeavour, just as they had during the War (Note 10). It was obvious that a period of revaluation and reconstruction would need to take place after the war, but preparations needed to begin early. This kind of thinking influenced the world of Quakerism, including Quaker employers in the areas of industry and commerce (Grant and Muers, 2017 p. 22).

The beginning of post-war reconstruction thinking in the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) can be traced back to the decision by the Yearly Meeting of 1915 appointing a Committee:

> To investigate what connection there is between war and the social order, to encourage the study of the question, and to consult with those Friends who have been led, owing to the war, to feel the need of a personal adjustment of their way of life (*Quakerism and Industry*, 1918, p. 10 [hereafter referred to as '*Report*']).

This War and Social Order Committee, as it became known, produced a great deal of interesting information on relationships between people and ways of living, and it was out of this Committee that the Quaker Employer Conferences emerged. One employer who had participated in the discussions of the War and Social Order Committee was John C Morland of Clark, Son and Morland, a Glastonbury tannery. He had felt a need for Quaker employers

to meet as a separate group, and discuss those matters of common concern (*Report*, p. 11). Out of these meetings emerged the first Quaker Employers Conference in 1918.

The 1918 Conference of Quaker Employers (Kimberley, 2019c)

For some years, a number of employers belonging to the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) had felt a need to examine the way in which their faith could be given fuller expression in business life. This resulted in a Conference being called that invited all members of the Society employing upwards of 50 employees. This involved issuing 375 invitations. The numbers present at one or more sittings of the Conference was 90, representing in total 75 firms. Overall, they employed about 44,000 employees, out of a total of not less than 100,000 employees in Friends' firms (*Report*, p. 129). A great variety of industries were represented, including coal and iron, railways, textiles, several branches of engineering, flour and sugar milling, chemicals, starch, food products such as biscuits, chocolate, cocoa and tea, laundries, builders and contractors. For the most part Quaker employers came from the manufacturing trades, mainly small to medium sized enterprises, and from family firms. Some firms that were not large were nevertheless notable in their respective industries, for example W & R Jacob (biscuits) and C & J Clark (shoes) (Jeremy, 1990).

Quaker employers had been questioning for some time how their religious faith might be given fuller expression in business life (*Report*, pp. 11, 14). It was one thing to say that Quakers were committed to the 'brotherhood of man', but of course business practice could easily (and sometimes did) fall short of such high ideals. It was clear that the period of reconstruction after the War would offer the opportunity to encourage and support a general improvement in industrial standards, and Quaker employers were committed to making use of this Conference to promote that purpose (*Report*, p. 11). Discussion at the Conference was to focus on discovering and defining the duties of employers within the economic system as it currently ran. Although abroad there were those at this time who were prepared to challenge the very idea of a capitalist economic system, this was not the case among Quaker employers. For the most part they felt they could work to improve relationships in the workplace under the existing economic arrangements (*Report*, p. 134). Even so, in the Liberal reforming tradition they were prepared to work for change in those economic arrangements, if they felt the arrangements clashed with their faith. For the most part this meant they were prepared to use the economic system as a field to apply their understanding of Christian ethics. As employers, they saw this as their duty. For them, this was not a responsibility to be offloaded on to the state or anywhere else. Whilst they approached the issues and matters of concern as employers, they saw those responsibilities as being shared with the employees and shareholders. Indeed, this 'stakeholder' approach is something of a forerunner of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) approach typical of some employers today (Freeman and Hasmaoui, 2011).

As noted previously, John Child, in his early paper on Quaker employers and industrial relations, identified four characteristics of the Quaker social conscience in the workplace: opposition to exploitation, co-operation and peace-making, equal and democratic relationships, and the 'stewardship of talents', i.e. hard work, discipline, the careful use of resources, and service to others (Child, 1964). It was this emphasis on service to others that found its way into the conclusions of the Conference:

> We believe it is only in so far as those engaged in industry are inspired by the true spirit which regards industry as a national service, to be carried on for the benefit of the community, that any general improvement in industrial relations is possible. (*Report*, p. 131)

Child suggests these ideals of the Quaker employers were somewhat idealistic, which is perhaps correct, but then he goes on to place a heavy emphasis on the restrictive nature of social systems (Child, 1964, p. 294). Certainly, the social structure of British society could have a restraining influence on working class ambition and creativity, but this was not universally the case. Indeed, the emphasis placed at this time by Quaker employers and others on the importance of the individual, highlighted the importance of the Quaker belief that "there is that of God in everyone". It is this belief that demonstrates the importance of the individualistic tenet in the Quaker belief system, whilst still allowing for a collective design in Quaker decision-making. The Conference emphasised true fellowship as the basis of Quakerism and its attitude to all human relationships, including those in the workplace. Ultimately, the Quaker belief in the divine worth of all life provided a feeling and mood of hope. Whilst the challenges of industry were considerable, they were challenges the Quaker employers felt they could confront with a spirit of optimism.

a) The Chairman's Opening Address

The Conference began on Thursday 11 April, at 8.30pm with an address by the Conference Chair, Arnold S Rowntree, M.P. Although a Liberal M.P., Rowntree remained a member of the Board of the family company, and was at the Conference with his brother, Seebohm (*Report*, p. 127). His address was entitled 'The Industrial Outlook: With special reference to the responsibility of Quaker employers,' and he began by suggesting that the conference had a similar objective to the original purpose that led to the setting up of Woodbrooke – to help and prepare Friends for facing the contemporary world, including 'the stewardship of wealth' (*Report*, p.9). In his opening address, Rowntree drew attention to some of the statements that Friends had made in connection with conduct in the workplace. In the *Book of Christian Discipline* (Note 3) under the section related to the 'Responsibility of Employers'

> Friends are exhorted to watch over their young employees for good, and 'to be willing in various ways to show an affectionate interest in their comfort and welfare.' (*Report*, p. 12)

In the section on 'The Stewardship of Wealth' reference is made to the spirit of greed which, 'when unchecked by a sense of social responsibility [results in] a fierce industrial strife, in which the weak suffer.' Another section reminds Friends:

> Nor is it sufficient that we should be kind and liberal to the poor, for the poverty we seek to relieve is due in part to unjust conditions.
> (*Report*, p. 12)

Another part urged Quaker employers 'to pay a living wage, with reasonably permanent conditions of employment, and should not simply take advantage of the Labour market.' Finally, mention was made of Query 9a (Note 11 - Quakers have a series of *Advices and Queries* for reflection and prayer) *which asked*:

> Do you, as a Disciple of the Lord Jesus, take a loving interest in the social condition of those around you?.....Do you seek to understand the causes of social unrest, and to take your right share in the endeavour to remove them?
> (*Report*, p. 12)

Perhaps most importantly, in terms of the voice of labour, was Rowntree's reference to democracy. He acknowledged and welcomed the growing democratisation that was taking place in civil and public society, but was also conscious that this growth in political democracy was unaccompanied by a similar development in the workplace.

> Here we have broken away from our democratic ideal. We live in an age of political democracy and industrial autocracy.
> (*Report*, p. 15)

Although this comment applauding political democracy may have been a bit premature, given that British women were to wait another decade before receiving the vote at the same age as men (Note 12), it nevertheless demonstrated a commitment to a form of industrial democracy in the workplace, and was an example of a Quaker employer with pluralist credentials.

Rowntree made reference to the Whitley Report as a move in the right direction, but only one of the moves necessary to bring about a significant shift in workplace relationships. The Whitley Commission had been set up by the government during the War, to find ways of dealing with the serious industrial unrest that had occurred in the years prior to the conflict (Lyddon, 2012). But further work was needed to generate the right climate within the workplace, and this was perhaps the field in which Quaker employers had a particular role to play (*Report*, p. 19). The suspicion and mistrust that existed in the workplace needed to be replaced by goodwill and conciliation. Whilst Rowntree went on to make the extravagant claim that democracy rests on a Christian foundation, his faith nevertheless informed his thinking, and the belief that fellowship in the workplace provided a special bond provided his democratic ideal. Rowntree's support for the Whitley Report, and its

promotion of Joint Employer/Employee Industrial Councils, was a further indication of a major Quaker employer pursuing a co-operative approach that sat within the pluralist paradigm.

b) The Voice of Labour

The second session was particularly interesting in that it was given over to 'The Claims of Labour'. Giving a full session over to 'the voice of labour' sent a signal to the Labour movement that their claims were being taken seriously. Harold Clay, formerly Chairman of Leeds Labour Party, Tom Hackett, a Labour Councillor and activist within the Birmingham labour movement, and Nellie Scruton, an official of the Workers Educational Association, all spoke to the Conference. The purpose being to provide the employers with an informed set of opinions that were broadly representative of the wider Labour movement, as well as a set of voices that were bound to challenge Quaker employers on a range of issues. This willingness to engage with 'the voice of labour' in a spirit of co-operation and collaboration provides further evidence that Quaker employers sat firmly within the pluralist tradition.

The first to speak was Harold Clay. At this time, he was in the early stages of what was to become an impressive career in the Labour movement. He had originally been involved in the Social Democratic Federation, the first organised socialist party in Britain. He was a tram driver, and became involved in the United Vehicle Workers Union. In 1922, the Vehicle Workers merged into the new Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), and Clay then served as the TGWU's first area secretary for Yorkshire. He went on to become National Secretary of the Passenger Services Group in the union from 1925 to 1946, and was also Assistant General Secretary of the TGWU from 1940 to 1948. He was Chair of the London Labour Party from 1933 to 1948, and succeeded R H Tawney in becoming President of the WEA in 1943, serving until 1958 (Obituary, *The Guardian* 22 September, 1961). Clay began by acknowledging that the War had created problems for the Labour movement, in that there appeared to be some confusion as to what were the claims and ideals of labour. Even so, he maintained there was an idealism running through the Labour movement, suggesting that the Labour movement stood for something more than higher wages and better working conditions. For Clay, it was about workers receiving an improved 'status' within the workplace. Status is probably a term we would not use today, but essentially Clay was talking about dignity in the workplace, and the notion of 'the dignity of labour'. Although Clay made no reference to the idea of equality in the workplace, he made it clear that workers had not made the sacrifices they had as part of the War effort, to return to subservient 'master' and 'servant' type relationships after the War (*Report*, p. 22). A fundamental problem raised by Clay was that of the 'wages' system. He was of the view that the current arrangements effectively separated the worker from his or her work. This is an interesting notion in that it suggested something akin to the Marxist idea of alienation, one facet being the separation of the worker from his or her work. This separation of the

producer from the product or service induces a sense of isolation or estrangement from one's own humanity. Whilst it would be unwise to claim Clay as something of a Marxist, he nevertheless noted the worker experiencing something similar to the feelings noted by Marx in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (Marx, 1844).

Clay did note another text, however, *Co-operation or Chaos*, written by Maurice Rowntree, Quaker and member of the chocolate family (Rowntree, 1918). This book was a handbook that had been requested by the War and Social Order Committee, and dealt with the subject of reconstruction after the War. It was a book that advocated something along the lines of 'Guild Socialism', an idea that had received widespread publicity within the wider Labour movement at this time. Its main protagonist was G D H Cole, who had written on the idea in a number of books and pamphlets, of which *Self-Government in Industry* was perhaps the most well-known (Cole 1917). Guild socialism was a form of workers' control of industry, based upon the medieval idea of trade guilds, and an idea that was a socialist alternative to state control of industry. Clay clearly felt considerable sympathy with the general ideas promoted in *Co-operation or Chaos*. These views were reinforced later, when he reiterated the importance of raising the status of the worker in the workplace. A greater say for workers in industry was an important element in this process, and he preferred going down the route of shop stewards (Goodman and Whittingham, 1969) rather than the Whitley proposals. He believed this would help workers retain their independence of the employer, and be in a better position to represent the worker and his or her demands. For Clay, going down the route of employee participation in a Works Council ran the risk of sharing some responsibility for the running of the company with the managers and/or directors, and there was a danger this would compromise the employee representative (*Report*, p. 25).

Discipline was another thorny problem for workers. Clay emphasised the need for labour to have some say in the appointment of foremen, as well as some control over the work process. Together these two principles would help reduce the attitude, not uncommon among foremen, to 'drive' their workers. This was an indirect reference to the scientific management processes that had been gaining in popularity over the previous decade. The idea was to organise and structure the production of work as efficiently as possible. As already noted, whilst this appears a laudable aim, unfortunately it often resulted in de-humanising the worker, and reducing him or her to that of a machine. Clay believed that if Labour had some say in the appointment of foremen, it would go some way towards ensuring the worker would be treated with dignity and respect. In conclusion, the overriding impulse of Clay was towards more democratisation in the workplace. In particular, he maintained the worker was opposed to the "capitalist with a conscience":

> Labour was not particularly favourable towards benevolent despotism, or despotism of any kind, but rather desired to work out its own destiny. The assistance given by the better type of employer would be readily accepted, but the workers did not want employers to do too many things for them (*Report*, p. 26).

This demonstrates that despite the idea of worker independence advocated by Clay, he believed the Labour movement remained a co-operative movement, was not isolationist, and was not looking to move towards some kind of workers' control of industry.

Harold Clay was followed by Tom Hackett. Hackett worked for the Cadbury company, had joined the Labour Party, and was elected to Birmingham City Council in 1913. He registered as a conscientious objector during World War I, which his opponents focused on when he stood in the 1918 general election. He contested Birmingham King's Norton for the Birmingham and District Co-operative Representation Council, with the support of the Labour Party. He finished in second place with a 35.8% share of the vote. The council subsequently became the Birmingham branch of the Co-operative Party, and Hackett chaired the branch for four years from 1919. In 1920, Hackett was re-elected to the council, eventually being made an alderman in 1941. He finally lost his seat in 1949. In his spare time, he was a tutor for the Workers' Educational Association (Martin, 1978).

Hackett also went on to become heavily involved with the Works Councils introduced by the Cadbury company in 1918/19. He began by emphasising what he believed to be the change that had come about within the Labour movement, and that change was a moral and spiritual development rather than an economic one. This suggested to him that trade unionism had moved beyond being a merely protective body, towards a movement that was more positive and constructive. He felt this more wholesome and widely-embracing approach was similar to that of Christian brotherhood. This emphasis upon the spiritual was interesting, in that this is an area rarely explored within the field of industrial relations (Mayor, 1967). Some reference to this by a leading Labour movement activist of the day like Hackett goes some way towards countering the often-implied contention that the industrial struggles at this time were between a politically radical workforce and the capitalist employers (Lyddon, 2012). Despite Hackett's allusions to the spiritual in his address, there is no evidence to suggest he was a Quaker. Hackett made similar points to Clay in that he demanded the right of workers to control their own destinies, including that of appointing their own foremen and administering discipline in the workplace. He maintained that workers had the right to good quality working conditions that covered wages, health and welfare. "No man should be expected to work under conditions that were dehumanising" (*Report*, p. 26). He felt that Capital had acted badly during the War, and this had resulted in workers having little confidence in the Whitley Report and its proposals. This criticism he shared with Clay, along with the belief that the gap in conditions between skilled and unskilled labour was too large. This latter belief was not typical of all workers. The skilled sections of the workforce were often defensive of the premium they received for their skill, and were usually unwilling to share it with the unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Here is Hackett making the case for some levelling of pay between the skills:

> It was perfectly true that there was a solidarity in Labour that was increasing with every passing month. This was brought about because they recognised that they were human beings and that everyone had a right to live, and they were prepared to take up the part of the men in not quite such good circumstances as themselves. (*Report*, p. 31)

Hackett's final point was a demonstration of his commitment to the co-operative movement, which had recently formed its own political party. Established in 1917, the Co-operative Party was founded by co-operative societies to campaign politically for the fairer treatment of co-operative enterprise and to elect 'co-operators' to Parliament (Carbery, 1969). For Hackett, the ideal of labour was a co-operative relationship between labour and capital. But not at any cost! In a concluding comment, Hackett had harsh words for the inefficient company whose survival on the basis of poverty wages was anathema to him:

> Finally, some might say that it was impossible to pay a living wage. It was obvious no business ought to exist which could not pay a man a living wage, and if that business, because it could not organise itself and adapt itself to the changing methods of the time, was unable to allow men to enjoy a minimum standard of life, he contended the nation and individuals would be better without such a business at all. (*Report*, p. 32)

The final voice for labour was that of Nellie Scruton. In a self-effacing introduction she claimed she could not speak for organised labour, or indeed articulate labour. Instead, she believed she spoke for unorganised and inarticulate labour. This was because she was there in her capacity as a representative of the Workers Educational Association (WEA). Nellie Scruton had been at the inaugural meeting of the Bradford WEA in 1909, attending the first class tutored by Arthur Greenwood, who went on to become the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party under Clement Attlee. Over the years Scruton served the branch as secretary, treasurer and President, and lived a lived a long and active life as a supporter of working class education (Snowden, 1987). Scruton was quite clear in her view that the same educational opportunities for all would bring about equality for all. She rejected the one-sided view of some employers that employees alone needed to adopt a wider outlook, sounder judgement and a deeper sense of social obligation. Instead, Scruton suggested these views were not peculiar to any one class, but were common to all classes. Adequate wages were needed so as to enable workers to live a reasonable and decent life, one free from the worries of the workhouse, a system that did not cease until 1930. She concluded by noting that whilst the WEA tutorial classes were a valuable ally for workers, they needed to have the energy to make good use of them, not be constantly tired due to long working hours. Hence, Scruton was a keen advocate of a shorter working week (*Report*, pp. 35, 38).

The Quaker employers asked the three representatives of 'Labour' a series of questions that were both interesting and informative. Arthur Sisson wanted to know if workers were keen to develop the future on a moral and spiritual basis, as had been suggested (*Report*, p. 36). Jon E Hodgkin was hopeful that the Joint Committees proposed

would have a wider role than that of merely settling disputes (*Report*, p. 36). Amy C Morland wanted to know how women might continue their education, so that they could take a full role on the Industrial Councils (*Report*, p. 36), and Wilfred H Brown was curious to know how the notion of a basic wage would affect higher pay for those with higher levels of skill (*Report*, p. 37). These provided further examples of the Quaker employers' willingness to engage with 'labour' on their own terms, discussing and debating in a spirit of co-operation and goodwill – all good examples of pluralist principles. In the case of Cadbury, this kind of pluralist approach cannot be emphasised enough, as it was absolutely central in all Cadbury and the company did. This level of discussion and co-operation had already found its way into the Cadbury company through shop and works committees, as well as long-standing encouragement of trade union membership amongst employees.

Hackett, replying to Arthur Sisson, asserted that workers were indeed demanding better pay and conditions on moral and spiritual grounds. For him, it was about encouraging and supporting workers to cultivate their higher instincts, and this was a spiritual aim that could only be progressed through co-operation between the employer and employee (*Report*, p. 39). Despite this reference to the spiritual, Hackett accused the Church of being reactionary, usually taking the side of the employer against the worker. In doing so, he believed, workers would remain sceptical of the Church until it became more aware of its moral and social responsibility towards them. But Hackett retained hope alongside these criticisms. He believed that the availability of more education for the workers would make matters better. Some trade unions had organised study circles that did much good work, and ultimately these arrangements would provide greater and better opportunities. Reference was also made to Fircroft College, the adult residential college set up by George Cadbury Junior, which provided more of an all-round education (*Report*, p. 40). Hackett recommended the setting up of more 'Fircroft's' after the War (*Report*, p. 40). Before concluding his replies, Hackett returned to the question of the bullying foreman. Noting that this approach was unlikely to get the best out of the worker, he believed the only way to avoid this happening was to give workers some say in the appointment of the foremen. This was clearly a worker aspiration of the time, but remained something of an unrealistic demand. One questioner had asked whether workers should be paid the same regardless of skill. Hackett's reply seemed naive. He believed the best way forward was to ensure each worker did the job for which he or she was best fitted. Paying the same wage would then be about greater efficiency rather than the question simply being one of pay (*Report*, p. 41). But this ignored the premium placed on skill by workers. Within the craft trade unions, their fundamental purpose was to negotiate a differential in pay for their members over and above that of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Why else serve a lengthy apprenticeship?

Scruton added more comment to the question on 'education'. As regards women's further education, she believed there was no better education to be had than the tutorial classes provided by the WEA. This was no surprise given Scruton's association with the

WEA. Nevertheless, the WEA was gaining widespread support during this period, and many well-known politicians had been or would be associated with the organisation. Further, Scruton reinforced the political point that the working day was too long for women, and that the only way they would be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities like those supplied by the WEA, was if their working day was reduced to eight hours or less (*Report*, pp. 38-9).

Clay's replies were perhaps the most incisive. He made it clear he was opposed to benevolent employers and acts of patronage. It was far better that the workers assert their own rights and demands. Joint Industrial Councils were unlikely to work, as there was a fundamental antagonism between labour and capital. The Whitley Councils needed to be more than simply an attempt at bringing about industrial peace (*Report*, p. 42). As regards education, Clay was enthusiastic about more education for workers, but reminded the Quaker employers that when it came to social matters, employers were in need of more education too. Clay went on to make something of a prescient comment about the shop stewards movement. As a relatively recent innovation at the time, shop stewards created anxiety among employers. They were outside the official framework of their trade unions, and usually numbered amongst their membership the more radical elements within the trade union movement. Clay suggested shop stewards had emerged as a result of war-time legislation, and were likely to become an official part of the trade union movement once they gained in profile and strength**.** This, of course, is precisely what happened (Warren, 1971).

c) The status of the worker

On Friday 12th April at 8pm, J Bernard Shewell introduced the fourth session on the status of the worker. The 'voice of Labour' had made it clear at the outset of the Conference that the notion of 'status' was the most pressing concern of the worker. This would perhaps surprise many unfamiliar with the world of industrial relations, yet it is often the foundation stone of harmonious working relationships. The assumption of many, not least some established commentators on the world of work, is that the overriding motivating factor is pay. But this is rarely the case (*Report*, pp. 21-22), and it says something about Quaker employers that they were aware of this, making the status of the worker a key session at the Conference. Bernard Shewell set the tone in his comments at the beginning of his address:

> We have met together to consider our responsibilities, as employers of labour, not only to the worker, but also to the community at large, towards the great efforts that must be made after the War, to close the long-open breach between master and men, and bring about an industrial unity which shall meet the new era of intense production necessitated by the wastage of war.
> (*Report*, p. 55)

The importance of unity was emphasised, but the benevolent employer, along with a sympathetic state, was not the answer. In order to bring about an improvement in the status of the worker, Shewell invoked the notion of an "all-embracing human brotherhood". He noted that in the past employers had exploited the excess of available labour, and had used this to drive down pay and conditions. Now, however, the War had changed the working environment. The demand for labour now exceeded supply, and the worker was beginning to have the upper hand. The only way the employers would really understand their employees was to place themselves in their position. Only then would they understand the thoughts and aspirations of the workers. Those Friends who had connections with the Adult School movement had a better understanding, as their work had involved close contact and communication with the working classes and their particular needs (Rowntree and Binns, 1985).

Shewell covered a number of different problems in his paper, including short time working, shift system arrangements and the new levels of automation that were de-humanising the worker. More positive aspects were also covered, including industrial councils and works committees, education and better ways of dealing with issues of discipline in the workplace (*Report*, pp. 58-64). These latter three elements are all worthy of further elaboration, as they were attempts at creating those more co-operative and participative sets of workplace arrangements wanted and valued by all. It was noted that the idea of Works Councils and Works Committees were not new, but it was emphasised that they should be both democratic and equally representative of both employers and employees. This intimates that such arrangements were not necessarily the case in the past, probably suggesting that Quaker employers had either done much of the appointing on such bodies, or, alternatively, had not allowed for equal representation of both employer and employee (*Report*, p. 59). Alongside his firm understanding of representation on such bodies, Shewell also clearly defined what he thought should be the areas of debate and discussion:

> Among the questions that may be discussed at these Committees are the following:- works rules, methods of pay, bonus rates, alterations in working hours, matters affecting health, safety and conditions of work, cases of theft and misconduct, canteens, means of getting to work, dismissal of employees, thrift schemes, holidays, etc., etc.
> (*Report*, p. 59)

These very wide-ranging areas of decision-making go some way towards displaying the extent to which Quaker employers were prepared to share their roles and responsibilities with their employees. Once again, classic examples of a pluralist approach to industrial relations. Shewell was equally clear as to the way in which these Councils and Committees could retain their freshness and vitality (*Report*, p. 59-60). Elections should be by secret ballot, and employer and employee representation should be equal. The term of office ought to be in the range of 1.5 to 2 years, and retiring members should not be eligible for

re-election for at least six months after retiring. Equal representation for women should be ensured, and Councils and Committees should meet regularly, probably monthly, and minutes kept, approved and signed.

Education received enthusiastic support too. Quaker employers had a belief in an all-round education rather than too narrow a technical or vocational training. A half-day a week was suggested by Shewell (*Report*, p. 61). This was mainly addressed to young people up to the age of 18. It is perhaps worthwhile reminding ourselves that young people left school at the age of 14 or earlier, so some form of further education supported by the employer up to the age of 18 usually involved at least four years further education. The education and training was to be of a good quality, and was expected to make the young people professionals in their chosen crafts and trades.

Finally, a few words about discipline. Discipline was something that was deeply felt by both employers and employees, but for different reasons. Employers were generally very defensive of their right to discipline employees. For employers, some employees could be described as lazy, feckless and disruptive, and often in need of being disciplined. For employees, employers were usually more concerned with achieving high levels of production whatever the cost to employees in terms of their health and well-being. Shewell thought that Quaker employers were better than this, and put forward several ideas (*Report*, p. 63). But first he opposed the relatively new idea of 'guild socialism', the idea principally associated with G D H Cole (*Report*, p. 63). Guild socialism suggested workers' control, where self-government by the workers would be the norm, and foremen and managers would be elected by the employees. Shewell dismissed this idea as one that would lead to a loss of discipline in the workplace, and one where clashes between employee and employer were likely to increase rather than reduce (*Report*, p. 63). On the contrary, suggested Shewell, discipline is not harmful as long as it is not overdone. Further, it usually meant employees worked better and more happily when they had a clear understanding of the rules. Shewell noted that whilst there are lazy employees, they are rarely held in high esteem by their fellow employees (*Report*, p. 64). If employers display trust in their workers, this often results in a return of that trust. Inevitably, this mutual goodwill tends to bring together labour and capital, which ultimately fosters the idea of an all-embracing human brotherhood, encouraged and supported by Quaker employers. These views demonstrated the parameters within which Quaker employers were prepared to go. Shewell probably places too much confidence in levels of mutual trust and goodwill, but it remains a good example of Quaker employer willingness to explore new and different ways of dealing with employee relationships.

Shewell's address and the subsequent discussions and conclusions of the Conference went some way towards engaging with the issues of most concern to employees. There remained issues of difference, but this was a sincere (and quite unique) attempt at discussing with the representatives of labour their concerns. Although a Labour movement

stalwart like Clay had reservations about Works Councils, the very fact that he was prepared to attend the Conference and engage in discussion and debate indicated his willingness to co-operate with employers. Similarly, Hackett, a Cadbury employee, was quite firm in asserting the right of workers to determine their own destinies, resisting the commonly held view among some commentators that Quaker employers like Cadbury were merely paternalists (Campbell Bradley, 1987). Finally, Scruton emphasised the importance of education to the worker, particularly women workers. There was little for the Quaker employers to disagree with here, and her views were received with enthusiasm and support by the Quaker audience (*Report*, pp. 138-139).

What the first Quaker conference established then, was the belief in promoting good working relationships between employer and employee, and also their preparedness to work hard to achieve that aim. This theme would be taken up ten years later in their next conference.

Quaker Employers Conference 1928

Although the Quaker Employers Conference of 1928 is beyond the period I am covering (1899 – 1919), it is important that some reference is made to it in addressing the comments made by some critics. First, a brief overview of the Conference. It took place again at Woodbrooke in Bournville, and lasted for four days in April. 100 people represented a similar range of employers to that of 1918, and the Cadbury companies had nine family members in attendance, denoting the level of importance the family gave to the Conference. Edward Cadbury was one of those in attendance, and provided the 'Welcome' to the Conference. The range of topics covered were similar to those of 1918, suggesting they remained important to the Quaker employers: 'The Workers' Share of the Product', 'Co-operation in Control', 'Training for Business Management', 'Security of the Worker', 'Problems of Smaller Businesses' and 'The Spirit of Renunciation in 'Industry'. Once again there was a heavy emphasis on the employer-employee relationships, with an interesting final session reminding the observer of the spiritual basis of the Conference. This spiritual basis was perhaps best demonstrated by the references made to 'Foundations of a True Social Order', the eight point framework that had been agreed at London Yearly Meeting (annual conference of Quakers) in 1918. These eight points remain a cornerstone of Quaker witness today, so have been of long-standing importance.

In 1918 the Conference had been enthusiastic about giving the worker a say in the workplace, but it was never a form of equal decision-making. The final report had made it clear that the financial and commercial sides of decision-making remained with the employer (*Report*, 1918, p. 69). But Child in his paper seems to suggest that Quaker employers had shifted their position between 1918 and 1928 by 'accommodating' Quaker precepts to business objectives after the early 1920s (Child, 1964, p. 299). That appears a misjudgement. Whilst there is a clear change of tone and emphasis by 1928, the fundamentals still applied. Edward Cadbury in his 'Welcome' to the Conference said:

> We shall all agree that the worker ought to have some voice in the management of the industry in which he spends a large part or the whole of his working life, but at present I see no way in which he can be given any effective control in large scale industry (*Report*, 1928, p. 1)

Effective control simply meant that the financial and commercial decision-making role remained with the employer, and did not in any way detract from the point already made in the 1918 *Report*.

Later in the Conference, another example of the continuity that existed between 1918 and 1928 was revealed by an Edward Cadbury intervention. The session on 'Co-operation in Control' had been introduced by Ivy Drewe, who read a paper on 'The Value of Joint Co-operation of Management and Workers in Industry'. She emphasised that she was looking at co-operation in control "from a woman worker's point of view" (*Report*, 1928, p. 31). Her paper covered shop committees and the election of their members, works councils and their constitutions, and finally the effect these sorts of bodies have on women workers as representatives. In the ensuing discussion, Edward Cadbury made a telling comment about the importance of higher education for women, so that they could take on greater responsibilities in the workplace. But he also noted an important danger:

> If they got workers too closely in touch with the functions of management, they tended to become separate from their fellow-workers, and no longer represented them. That was probably due to their increased intelligence and development, and having more responsibility, they got a broader and different outlook from their fellow-workers. It was one of the criticisms that had to be made of the proposals for the appointing of employee Directors that they ceased to be truly representative after a period in office (*Report*, 1928, p. 37)

No doubt the cynic would doubt the integrity of this comment, believing instead that it was simply an excuse to deny workers, in this case women workers, the right to make decisions at the highest levels in the company. But another interpretation is possible. This is simply a repeat of a comment Cadbury had made long before about ensuring the worker was not tempted to betray his social class and trade union roles (Cadbury, 1912, p. xvii). To take this further, academic stalwarts of pluralism, like Hugh Clegg, took this position (1975), as did many trade unionists, as noted in the Bullock proposals (1977).

Jeremy, in his commentary on the Quaker Employers Conferences, mocks the "almost pontifical statements of the 'Foundations of a True Social Order' ", suggesting they were far removed from reality (Jeremy, 2000, p. 171). Taken together, the eight statements might look like a tall order, but two of the eight that specifically refer to work seem simple enough, and are the kind of comments that would be supported by many employers: "Mutual service should be the principle upon which life is organised. Service, not private gain, should be the motive of all work" and "The spiritual force of righteousness, loving-kindness and trust is mighty because of the appeal it makes to the best in every man, and

when applied to industrial relations achieves great things." (*Report*, 1928, p. 97) The language might appear dated and quaint, but the sentiments expressed were clearly strongly felt, and many Quaker employers made sincere efforts to implement them in practice.

Conclusion

It seems clear that the kinds of issues that were being discussed at the first and second Quaker Employers Conferences, were already being acted upon in Cadbury (Cadbury, 1912). Cadbury was not alone. Rowntree was almost parallel to the Cadbury company in having a similar range of employee benefits and services (Rowntree, 1921). Other Quaker companies appear to have had less well-developed systems in their workplaces, but appear nevertheless to have been ahead of most firms for their time (Emden, 1939). These examples seem to counter the more pessimistic conclusions reached in a recent paper on the 1918 Quaker Employers Conference (Tibballs, 2019). *Contra* Rowlinson, it appears reasonable to assume that the religious practices of Quaker employers like Cadbury and Rowntree were a major influence on how they ran their companies. There was no overt demonstration of their Quaker faith. Instead the family members that ran the businesses demonstrated this in their lifelong membership of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), and the many Quaker roles and responsibilities they assumed. They also provided much funding for the Society and for its work (Emden, 1939, Windsor, 1980).

The late nineteenth century had seen Quakerism in Britain shift from being of the predominantly evangelical type, to one incorporating a 'social gospel' akin to the more modernist thinking of the times (Dandelion, 1995). This more open, liberal approach to one's faith, seemed to chime with the times, and Quakers incorporated this new thinking into their daily lives (Kennedy 2001, pp. 157-210). Biblical criticism and the scientific approach were not restricted to religious matters, but were used in their business lives too. Hence their willingness to 'experiment' with new and different ways of running their businesses. By and large this produced new and better ways of running workplaces, which included a more co-operative and participative approach to employee relations. This has been demonstrated by the Cadbury initiatives, and Edward Cadbury was central to that whole process. These managerial approaches provided something of a critique of the scientific management school of thinking current at the time. This willingness to 'experiment' and openness to alternative ways of running their businesses, can find no better expression than that of their willingness to engage with the 'Voice of Labour' at their first Conference. As the Conference Report shows, the Quaker employers were willing to listen, as well as question, the labour representation and how it thought the future might look. The overall exchange of views appeared to be healthy and constructive. There was agreement as well as disagreement, but overall there appeared a willingness to search for

co-operation and compromise. In essence, this provides a further example of how the mainstream Quaker employer thinking of the time fitted within the pluralist framework.

Taken together, the Quaker Conferences of 1918 and 1928 confirm that Quaker employers were engaging with notions and ideas that we would identify today with industrial relations pluralism. This was not a passing phenomenon, but one with which they made an important contribution to British management thought in the early days of its development. Cadbury was in the vanguard of those developments, and it is no surprise to find that many of his thoughts and ideas, developed throughout his working life at Bournville, were being discussed and developed at the Conferences.

Discussion

Introduction

In this section, I draw together the central strands of the thesis. The thesis proposed to address three key issues or questions: a) to what extent was the firm of Cadbury paternalistic? b) was the management approach at Cadbury an early form of pluralism? c) how influential was Quakerism to the development of the workplace system at Cadbury. Some time has already been devoted to c) contesting Rowlinson's idea that Quakerism was a convenient label to invoke, and b) arguing the case that Cadbury was an early example of 'sophisticated modern', or 'neo' pluralist. Less time has been given to challenging the idea that a) Cadbury was a paternalistic company, and it is here we must therefore begin.

To what extent was Cadbury an example of a paternalistic company?

As already noted, it is commonplace for commentators to refer to the approach of Quaker employers like Cadbury as paternalist. Having already reviewed some of the literature on paternalism in Section One, I will now turn to what I consider to be a more informed, as well as practically useful, means of assessing the extent to which we might consider Cadbury to be 'paternalistic'. To do so, I will make use of the research provided by Ackers (1998). Ackers has researched the areas of paternalism and associated areas over some years (e.g. 1991, 2001), but adopts a somewhat different approach (Ackers, 1998). Rather than attempt a definition or description, he generates a series of seven propositions. These propositions, he suggests, can be used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of paternalism in a historical (or contemporary) setting. This approach suggests itself as more realistic and helpful in getting us beyond some of the more mundane discussions about paternalism. This series of propositions can be seen as a set of benchmarks by which to measure the idea and practice of paternalism in a historical setting. In what follows, I shall use this set of propositions as a framework around which to assess Cadbury's paternalism, including identifying and highlighting elements of the Ackers approach that either don't 'fit' the Cadbury system, or fits it uneasily. This should help bring out what I consider to be a more measured understanding of the management system ushered in by Edward Cadbury, one that takes more note of the spiritual dimension, but also one that more fully engages with notions of pluralism.

Proposition 1: The concept of paternalism requires, at once, a precise general theoretical definition and a more detailed taxonomy of the various forms it takes.

The earlier discussion touched upon paternalism as a concept or idea, and noted the difficulty in reaching any agreed definition. As already noted (p. 1) there are two main understandings that most commentators would accept, but no 'precise general theoretical definition'. This might suggest something of a weakness, as it leaves us without anything precise by which to judge the Cadbury case. As already noted in the section on 'Methods

and Sources', history as a discipline has rarely worried itself too much with the idea of 'theory' (pp. 12 – 23). Certainly Marxists and postmodernists emphasise the importance of 'theory', but most historians would associate themselves with a more empirical and evidence-based discipline, one that builds up, in the words of Marwick, "bodies of knowledge about the past" (Marwick, 2011, p. 272).

Whilst it would be wrong to be too dismissive of theory, achieving 'a precise general theoretical definition' is perhaps a step too far. Any consideration of a contested concept, of which 'paternalism' is a good example, is unlikely to arrive at a settled definition. For this reason, it is perhaps better to concentrate more energy on the second element of Ackers first proposition, 'a more detailed taxonomy of the various forms it takes'. To begin with, we can take Newby's idea that paternalism is a 'gift relationship', one where there is "a relationship between the employer, who was father-like and kind, and the subordinate child-like employee" (Newby, 1975, p. 118). This description certainly resonates with the Cadbury way of organising the Bournville site, and is similar to the 'weak' version of paternalism mentioned at the beginning of this thesis. In Edward Cadbury's book, *Experiments in Industrial* Organization (1912), the flavour of the relationship is obvious, and this indicates Cadbury's concern for the individual as a worker, as well as the wider impact good working relationships have on society.

Whilst there is undoubtedly something of a 'softer' paternalistic approach in Cadbury, the spiritual dimension is also present. References to the moral condition of the workers suggest this, although there remains no specific reference to religion or belief itself. This is typically Quaker. The emphasis throughout the history of the faith has been one of action and example rather than one of imputation and instruction. Emphasis is upon the whole person and their wellbeing. The extent to which Cadbury shunned the narrow social control paternalistic approach is best illustrated in his own words:

> We must keep in mind that a man and his personality is always an end in itself, and working people in the future will have to be treated less as tools and more as men [sic]..... my test of any factory organization is the extent to which it creates and fosters the atmosphere and spirit of co-operation and goodwill, *without in any way lessening the loyalty of the worker to his own class and its organizations* (my italics, Cadbury, 1914, pp. 8-9).

This, again, indicates Cadbury's concern for the whole person, and relates to the individual at a deeper, more spiritual, level. In particular, it indicates Cadbury's acknowledgement of the two sides of industry. This acknowledgement is important, as the committed paternalist refuses to accept this, instead arguing that the employer and employee have common interests, and *only* common interests. The narrow social control paternalist would see this more pluralistic notion of 'two sides' in industry as false or misleading. Clearly common interests between employer and employee can be found. An obvious example would be the need for the company to be sufficiently successful to remain in existence. But, for Cadbury

this has to be secured in ways which do not undermine workers' other interests in decent work. This idea of the multiple interests of the worker has recently been discussed by Edwards (2017). Nevertheless, Cadbury saw this as only part of the answer, fully accepting (and encouraging) employees to become members of trade unions and remaining loyal to them. Collective bargaining with trade unions became an important means of doing business with Cadbury employees. Edward Cadbury could countenance a workforce loyal to trade unionism and its own social class, because he had a deep faith in and sense of fellowship with his fellow human beings. Not for him the need for division and exploitation, but instead an outward-looking sprit of support and concern. This behaviour both encouraged and promoted relations of trust in the workplace, along with a relatively harmonious working environment.

Proposition Two: A great strength of paternalism as a mode of industrial relations analysis is its capacity to transcend narrow economistic explanations of working class attitudes and behaviour derived directly from the labour process, by drawing on the wider circles of community, family, religion and politics

This idea seems of particular relevance when considering the Cadbury approach. The wider circles of community, family, religion and politics did not all appear on the Cadbury radar, but a sense of community and its associated aspects did. This can best be demonstrated by considering the development of the Bournville village. Throughout the early period of industrialisation, companies had been providing housing for their employees. Well-known examples would include Robert Owen's New Lanark (1799), Titus Salt's Saltaire (1851) and Lever's Port Sunlight (1888). But these company houses were normally tied to the employee's contract, so, no employment, no house. But worse than this, the level of intrusion often extended to everyday discipline, health and education too. This was not the case with Cadbury. Cadbury house building had begun with the purchase of the factory site at Bournville in 1879. As the 14.5 acre Greenfield site was 4 miles south west of the city, getting there was difficult for workers. The firm responded by constructing 16 semi-detached houses alongside the factory. These were to house key workers. The next stage was in 1885, when 12 terraced houses were built in Stirchley. Six years later, the firm added an Institute for cultural and recreational purposes. In 1892 six cottages and an Institute were built in Northfield. Each development was constructed in a different style. However, the major development took place after George Cadbury purchased 120 acres alongside the factory in 1893. The first batch of Bournville houses were released in 1895 on 999 year leases. There were 138 in total, and unlike other company towns, were not limited to company employees. The aim had been to build affordable low density housing, with generally favourable re-payment arrangements. It would appear that the re-payment arrangements were too generous for some, as they promptly sold them at profits of up to 40%. This unintended consequence was much to the distaste of George Cadbury, particularly as the skilled workers he was hoping to attract were unable to afford them.

Learning from his mistake, George Cadbury next built 227 smaller houses for rent in 1898. They were at manageable rents for artisans, and were followed by the purchase of the woodlands site of 195 acres in 1899 for further development. Up to this stage, despite the favourable terms offered, George Cadbury had acted as a property developer. But this changed in 1900, when he handed over 313 houses and 330 acres to the Bournville Village Trust. This charitable trust began to oversee the running of the estate, and any surpluses generated were used to maintain and develop the estate. Throughout the development of housing and the Bournville estate, George Cadbury and the company had derived no material benefit from the initiative. Indeed, it had been at considerable financial cost to both. Once again, the spiritual impulse seems to have been the dominating factor. No doubt some employees on the estate felt a sense of gratitude and loyalty to George Cadbury and the company, but this was not the stated purpose. There was simply a desire on his part and on the part of the Cadbury family to do the right thing, and this they did.

By this time Edward Cadbury was one of the five directors of the company, and followed his father George in taking a keen interest in the estate and its future development. Between 1902 and 1922, when he died, George Cadbury and his wife, Elizabeth, financed the building of schools, shops and community and sports facilities. This was the behaviour of a family that was less paternalistic, but more philanthropic. The philanthropy was infused with a sense of service and spirituality, so much so, that, despite being a family of Quakers, they provided free land to build the local Parish Church, St Francis of Assisi. The proposition suggested paternalism as a mode of analysis had the capacity to transcend a narrow economistic explanation, which it clearly does. The above examples confirm such. But the paternalism is at best the weaker of the two forms identified in our earlier definition (p. 1) and by Feinberg (Feinberg, 1971) and Newby (Newby, 1975). More likely it once again confirms the Cadbury family as practising Quakers, more concerned with the individual and his or her well-being, than with the purely economic rewards they might return.

Proposition Three: There is always a wide gap between the ambitions of paternalism as an employer strategy, and its realisation in worker deference, or commitment and loyalty to the business

This proposition is perhaps less important for our purposes, as it relates less obviously to Edward Cadbury and his management of the Bournville plant. Even so, some engagement with the proposition can be made, and this can begin with the notion of paternalism as an employer strategy. Managerial concepts and ideas were in their infancy in Cadbury's time, and the word strategy would have been a relatively new term without any precise definition. However, a strategy of a kind did exist for the firm, summarised by Cadbury in his 'Introduction' to his *Experiments in Industrial Organization*, when he referred to business efficiency and welfare being but different sides of the same coin (Cadbury, 1912, p. xvii). As Edward Cadbury and the Board were not interested in the 'realisation of worker

deference', this element of the proposition doesn't warrant excessive attention. The Cadbury family consistently involved their employees in a range of day-to-day decision-making, ranging from shop committees and health and safety, to sports facilities, always demonstrating attention and respect for employee opinion. None of this involved worker deference however.

Throughout his writings, Edward Cadbury often referred to carrying out work in 'the right spirit'. This was merely an extension of his beliefs, but one imbued with a practical application. The Quaker search for Truth was always tested through personal experience. The Quaker economist Kenneth Boulding suggested the Quaker search for Truth corresponded to the four moral principles on which science and technology was built: a) curiosity – what is the world really like? b) veracity – truth telling and avoiding lies; c) testing – in a range of different ways; and d) persuasion through evidence – not by threat or coercion (Boulding, 1987). Edward Cadbury's behaviour is consistent with this set of criteria, which is unsurprising given the examples of Quaker contributions to the scientific revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: John Dalton, the founder of modern chemistry, Abraham Darby, the first smelter of iron and coal, the Lloyd family, innovators in banking, and the first railroad, Stockton to Darlington, financed by the Quaker Pearce family. Edward Cadbury was simply following long-standing Quaker traditions in doing what he did. In behaving in this way, the Cadbury family attracted high levels of staff loyalty to the company. This loyalty began in the early years of the firm, and was still visible recently, during the widespread opposition to the Kraft takeover in 2010. Even so, such loyalty was only being reciprocated, as these workers were simply demonstrating support for what they considered to be a good employer.

Proposition Four: Paternalism in practice always balances coercion and consent, so it is sterile to counterpose economic dependence and ideological deference

The issue of 'coercion and consent' has always been an important one within the practice of paternalism, but particularly so in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was part of a much wider question of the time, one referred to as the 'labour question'. The labour question juxtaposed social welfare on the one hand, and social order on the other. In other words, to what extent, and by how much, should social welfare be provided to bring about the necessary quiescence in industry to retain social order? 'Coercion' and 'consent' sit reasonably comfortably within these two paradigms. This concern with the 'labour question' or 'labour problem', began emerging in the late nineteenth century, and sat on the agenda of government in 1891 when a Royal Commission on Labour was appointed. Its brief was to consider "questions affecting the relations between employers and employed, the combinations of employer and employed, and the condition of labour." The 'social order' side of the question had been prompted by the advent of 'new unionism'. Up until this period, trade unions had been of the 'top hat' variety, and consisted mainly of the craft-based trades. But this was changing, and the

many unskilled and semi-skilled workers that had emerged during industrialisation were beginning to organise themselves. Furthermore, there was a political radicalism that infused the new unionism, along with an upsurge in industrial conflict. The London dock strike of 1889 was symbolic of this new unionism.

But there was also the other side of the question, 'social welfare'. This had been brought to the fore by the social investigations of the time which brought to the attention of the public, and particularly those in authority, the deprivation and poverty of large sections of the working class. As already noted, the most well-known study was that of Charles Booth and his associates, first published in 1889. *Labour and Life of the People in London* documented in some detail the scale and depth of the misery endured by the working classes. But this study was not alone in documenting conditions of the poor. Seebohm Rowntree published his study of York (1901), William Beveridge researched unemployment (1909), and of course Edward Cadbury researched women and work in Birmingham (1906). The relationship between social welfare and social control was acknowledged to be an interdependent one. This was noted most obviously in the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on Labour. Due acknowledgement had been given to the issues of accidents and disease, long hours of work and systematic overtime, low pay and poverty, and unemployment. This culminated in these concluding comments of the Minority Report:

> .....the fundamental cause of disputes between employers and employed is to be found, we believe, in the unsatisfactory position occupied by the wage-earning class.....With economic conditions such as we have described, the relations between employers and employed cannot, in our view, fail to be unsatisfactory. Strikes, and other signs of resistance on the part of the wage-earners, however inconvenient they may be in themselves, are only symptomatic of a discontent with existing social conditions, which we regard as healthful and promising (Royal Commission on Labour, 1894, pp. 127-9).

The proposals put forward by the Minority Report suggested the need for wide-ranging statutory regulation. Indeed, the authors are quite specific in saying so:

> These reforms include: (a) The explicit and widely advertised adoption by the Government and all local authorities, of direct public employment whenever this is advantageous, the Eight Hours Day, Trade Union conditions, and a moral minimum wage (Royal Commission on Labour, 1894, p. 146).

A further four recommendations were made in the Minority Report, and Cadbury agreed with them all: an extension of the Factory Acts, addressing the problems of unemployment, appropriate housing for all workers, and an adequate pension in retirement. All of these were directed at government intervention, so Cadbury's commitment to statutory regulation was resolute.

Interestingly, this was just the opposite of what took place. It was only from the 1970s onwards that statutory regulation took hold, and not until the 1980s and 1990s before the current framework of individual employment rights emerged. Instead, the Majority Report agreed the need to tackle both sides of the 'labour question', but suggested this was best done through self-regulation and collective bargaining:

> Many of the evils to which our attention has been called are such as cannot be remedied by any legislation, but we may look in confidence to their gradual amendment by natural forces.....Powerful trade unions on the one side and powerful associations of employers on the other have been the means of bringing together in conference the representatives of both classes enabling each to appreciate the position of the other, and to understand the conditions subject to which their joint undertaking must be conducted (Royal Commission on Labour, 1894, p. 112).

As noted above, this approach tended to remain as the cornerstone of industrial relations in Britain until the 1970s. Limited state regulation of industrial relations, or 'Voluntarism' as it came to be known, was the preferred arrangement of employer, employee and government throughout this period.

Perhaps the most notable feature of the Minority Report is that the main author was Sidney Webb. Sidney, and his wife, Beatrice, were the main authors of two seminal studies in the field, *The History of Trade Unionism* in 1894 *and Industrial Democracy* in 1897. Noticeably, Beatrice had honed her social investigation skills as a member of Charles Booth's research team on *Labour and Life of People in London*. It is interesting that Edward Cadbury should draw on the Webb's with some enthusiasm in his book, *Women's Work and Wages*. This was the general tenor of all Cadbury's written work. He was very much of the view that consultation, discussion and negotiation would win through. His was a positive attitude, one that believed in the goodwill of all, and always maintaining the Quaker precept of 'there is that of God in everyone'. This belief animated his practices, and is evident in much of his work:

> I have always considered it a very important matter to eliminate as far as possible the internal friction which must arise to some extent in a factory under the present wages system. In any wages system there must be some element of driving, and the interests of employer and employed are never absolutely identical. On the other hand there is some identity of interest, and by the recognition of the workers' point of view, and by taking human nature into account this identity of interest can be emphasized, with the result that the goodwill and efficiency of the employees are fostered, and the staff and foremen can give practically the whole of their attention to organizing their departments, instead of their time and attention being absorbed in irritating details of personal friction and disobedience (Cadbury, 1914, p. 9).

This balanced, even-handed approach is replicated time and time again in his written work. It was a positive approach, typical of Edward Cadbury the Quaker, and was

demonstrated in the way relations between employers and employees were organised at the Bournville plant. As Williams notes:

> .....it may well be to stress the fact that the firm has always regarded Trade Unions as extremely convenient bodies with which to bargain, and as particularly valuable.....(Williams, 1931, p. 117).

Trade unions were recognised as important and useful bodies from very early on in the development of the Cadbury firm, and played an important role developing strong and enduring relationships between employer and employee, alongside those of the various Works Committees.

Proposition 5: Paternalism, in whatever shape or form, depends for its efficacy on the 'human element', on some sense of the visible human hand, however simulated, in lieu of impersonal economic forces.

This is another proposition that resonates with the Cadbury work and practices in the Bournville plant. The 'human element' was a central theme of the Cadbury experience, and in order to consider it further, we need to draw upon the interesting paper referred to earlier by John Child (Child, 1964). Although a range of authors and researchers have written on the firm of Cadbury, it is only Child who has attempted to engage in any sustained and significant way with the influence of their faith on Quaker employers and their business practices. Child noted the emphasis upon the 'Inward Light' in Quaker testimonies, and the strong belief in 'that of God in every man'. From this he drew the conclusion that the faith concerned itself strongly with the individual and his or her wellbeing. As already noted, this concern for the individual generated a social conscience of four elements:

(i) a dislike of the exploitation and profit of one man at the expense of another;
(ii) a traditionally puritan view of the 'stewardship of talents', stressing the value of hard work, lack of waste, the careful organisation of resources and a personal renunciation, all for the service of others;
(iii) a tradition of egalitarianism and democratic relationships, and
(iv) an abhorrence of conflict between men (Child, 1964, pp. 293-4)

Whilst some issue could be taken up with the overly individualistic interpretation placed by Child on the Quaker approach, this is not the place to do that. Instead, by focusing on Child's four elements, we can go a long way towards explaining the business ethic of Edward Cadbury and the Board. Each element can be taken in turn. The first element indicated an opposition to abuse and exploitation. In the workplace, this often centred on the notion of profit, and what should be regarded as reasonable and decent profit in the circumstances. There will always be arguments about what is reasonable in the circumstances, but Edward Cadbury had his own views on profit:

> Profits belong in three places: they belong to the business – to keep it steady, progressive and sound. They belong to the man who helped produce them. And they belong also, in part, to the public. A successful business is profitable to all three of these interests – planner, producer and purchaser (Cadbury, *BWM*, 1924, p. 76).

This statement is very Quakerly – clear, simple and succinct. It also considers all stakeholders, rather than just some. There is no reference to impersonal economic forces, just people. There is no doubt that the 'human element' is given prominence here.

The second element is more detailed, and covers a number of elements. Most successful business people are disciplined and hard working, and Edward Cadbury was no exception. It was on the basis of this work ethic that Edward and the Board organised the company. Whilst kindness and compassion were core Quaker values, these were always incorporated within a framework of order and method, as noted by a range of writers over the years (Gardiner, 1923, Williams, 1931, Emmett, 1939 and Windsor, 1980). Employees were always aware of the boundaries within which to work, and to go outside them might run the risk of sanctions. This approach is best described by Edward, when critically reviewing scientific management, whilst also acknowledging some of its merits. Here is the praise for aspects of Taylor's approach, which confirms Child's second notion:

> .....no business man who claims to be efficient will deny the necessity of such methods as accurate and detailed costs, the careful and scientific planning out of the machinery in a workshop, and a planning department to systematise the flow of work from one process to another. Although one may criticise some of the principles underlying Taylor's system of task work, there are many suggestions of his which, as time goes on, will have to be much more widely adopted.....(Cadbury, 1914, p. 2)

Edward Cadbury was simply being loyal to his faith when he promoted the ideas of hard work and efficiency. However, he always believed it was for the common good, not for personal gain, and had to be balanced with the human needs of the worker.

The third element, a tradition of egalitarianism and democratic relationships, was well advanced in the Cadbury company. The wider Quaker movement had long been committed to a sense of 'social order', and this had received particular attention around the period of the First World War. The idea of 'industrial democracy' had been a particular discussion point. The company had travelled some way down this path with its Shop Committees and Works Councils. Whilst these might not be the perfect answer, they certainly went some way towards giving workers a voice in the workplace. Edward Cadbury had either introduced or welcomed these initiatives, and was very supportive of their contribution.

The final element was an abhorrence of conflict. This was undoubtedly true, but there was more to it than that. Quakers would see themselves as active peacemakers, and worked very hard to cultivate and promote harmonious relationships wherever they were.

This would be particularly the case in the workplace, where the potential for disagreement and upset is high. This particular injunction was well-expressed in *Foundations of a True Order*, first agreed within the Quaker movement in 1918:

> The spiritual force of righteousness, loving-kindness, and trust is mighty because of the appeal it makes to the best in every man, and when applied to industrial relations achieves great things (London Yearly Meeting, 1918, Para 5).

Some of the obvious ways in which the company tried to do this was through Works Councils, Shop Committees, Suggestions Schemes, as well as through trade union representation. The important point to take away is that the firm promoted a 'culture' of goodwill and co-operation in the workplace. This 'mood' or 'way of doing things' took hold over the years, and eventually permeated the whole company. The 'spirit' that eventually emerged, was one of goodwill and co-operation, so fulfilling the Quaker ethic of active peacemaking. But this commitment to cooperation and harmony did *not* entail a denial of differences of interest, the need for workers to have independent representation, or attachment to their own class. This was not a blind abhorrence of conflict in simplistic unitarist terms, but a much subtler understanding that peace and harmony required hard work.

In a recent review of biographies on both R H Tawney and Richard Hoggart, the cultural critic Stefan Collini drew an interesting parallel between their approach, situating both within the English ethical socialism tradition. For Collini,

> .....their common affirmation of a number of deep, powerful truths shine through. Profit is a hollow and unworthy goal. The unchecked imperatives of the market deform and destroy human lives. The only force capable of resisting the destructive power of capital is the collective will to give expression to a common good through legal means – or in other words, the state (Collini, 2016, p. 199)

More will be said shortly of that English ethical socialism tradition, and where Cadbury fits in. Here it is sufficient to note the similarities between the approaches of those within the ethical socialist tradition, and the extent to which Cadbury approached the world of work with a very similar vision, despite arriving at that vision through a different route, i.e. Quakerism.

Proposition 6: Paternalism is not a general recipe for working class subordination but a hypothesis to be tested within a specific workplace and locality during a given historical period.

The idea of setting up consultative committees, or 'Whitley Councils', was welcomed by Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury staff, and was discussed and agreed at a Foremen's Conference at the Bournville site in October 1917. Describing the approach at the Conference as the 'democratisation' of industry, it was in this environment of co-operation and collaboration that Edward Cadbury and the other directors agreed in December 1917 to

recognise shop stewards on the Bournville site. The shop stewards 'movement', as it was described in the *Bournville Works Magazine*, was purely advisory, but remained a very radical idea (*BWM*, January, 1918, pp. 25-6). By supporting it, the Cadbury company indirectly confirmed it was not looking for working class subordination. To give recognition to such a radical shift in trade union representation (from full time official to local part time representative), was a significant tilt in the direction of Edward Cadbury's 'democratisation' of industry. The shop stewards movement was an example of grass roots leadership in the workplace which had been emerging since the late nineteenth century, beginning for the most part in the engineering and shipbuilding industries. As the size of factories and plants grew, changes took place in working arrangements and workplace techniques. Piece-rate and incentive schemes had increased in size and number, and workplace shop stewards had emerged to represent members on such issues. As the *Bournville Works Magazine* reported:

> What we are witnessing in the shop steward movement is the welling up in the workshop of the democratic spirit denied expression in public life (*BWM*, January, 1918, p. 25).

Reports on the Movement continued to be published in the *Bournville Works Magazine*, providing a strong flavour of trade union activity in the period. The establishment of Shop Stewards Committees even provoked lively correspondence in the *Bournville Works Magazine*. Here is one correspondent supporting the idea of clerks becoming trade union members:

> Workers Unite! I am not one of those who believe that the existing industrial system of the country must still form the basis of any future system, and so politically and economically I am averse to the Whitley proposals for after-war reconstruction. They are not revolutionary, and affect no change, consequently they leave us much as we were before.....(*BWM*, September, 1918, p. 216)

Not the kind of language that would endear itself to most business people and their companies! *But Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury Board did not simply provide a forum for debate and discussion for such issues, they actively promoted it*. Here is Edward Cadbury again, at the company New Year's Party of 1924: "As all here are now partners in the business I really feel that I ought to speak to you as partners and shareholders as well as fellow workers" (*BWM*, March, 1924, p. 75). This idea of partnership resonated throughout the business, and Edward Cadbury was the principal force driving that idea.

Proposition 7: The viability of paternalism, as a general employer strategy, is bounded not by time but by social structure

This is an interesting proposition in that it shifts away from some of the more usual references to paternalism, and instead concentrates on social structure. In other words, to what extent did the social structure of the day either promote or obstruct the facilitation of paternalism in the workplace? This is a very broad question, and cannot be fully answered

here. However, some comment can be made that is relevant, as well as being specific to Cadbury and Bournville. Richard Tawney made the following observation at the time:

> I assert with some confidence, that there has rarely been a period when the existing social order was regarded with so much dissatisfaction by so many intelligent and respectable citizens as it is at the present day (quoted in Winter and Joslin, 1972, p. 18).

There is no doubt that Tawney was right in highlighting the dissatisfaction that was widespread at the time. If we consider the progress of working class labour during this period, it is significant. The Labour Party had emerged in the first decade of the twentieth century, and had made steady progress in terms of political representation. 29 parliamentary seats were won at the 1906 general election, and 36 by 1910. This represented solid progress. But it was trade union development that was most striking. The increase in membership numbers was impressive, but the range of membership – skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled – was even more so. Despite this progress, the trade unions retained many of their nineteenth century traits, and remained somewhat conservative and traditional in outlook. There were exceptions of course, as for example the Triple Alliance of rail, transport and mining workers. They, nevertheless, remained the exception. Because of this it was not surprising that the potential for good working relations was present in many companies, not least Cadbury. A relatively old-fashioned and quaint trade union environment, coupled with an employer concerned for his employees and their welfare, created the ideal workplace social structure for harmony and goodwill.

At the first Quaker Employers Conference of 1918, the chairman of the Conference, Arnold Rowntree, M.P., noted recent struggles within British society for extensions of democracy:

> I notice there is no more remarkable fact in recent British history than the growth of the democratic spirit (*Quakerism and Industry*, 1918, p. 14).

Here Rowntree is agreeing with Tawney, in that he acknowledges the growing dissatisfaction with current arrangements of representation, and the desire on the part of the working class for a greater say in society as well as in the workplace. Rowntree went on to applaud the growth of that spirit, and noted its transfer from the national level to the towns and cities. However, there remained a substantial area of life that existed outside this democratic impulse. For Arnold Rowntree, this was the substantial subject matter of the Conference:

> It is one of the paradoxes of history that this steady growth of the democratic principle in our civil and political history has been unaccompanied by any similar satisfactory development in industry. Here we have broken away from our democratic ideal. We live in an age of political democracy and industrial autocracy. The Industrial Revolution, with the definite separation between the functions of the

> capitalist and the workman, brought down upon us an era of economic individualism. An unbridled scramble for the good things of life was set before each individual as the law of life (*Quakerism and Industry*, 1918, p. 15).

So where did the Cadbury company fit into all this? It was noteworthy that no less than four members of the Cadbury family attended the Conference: Barrow, George Jnr., J Hotham and William A. Not only this, but together they made many contributions to the Conference. George Jnr. even presented the paper for the fifth session on 'Working Conditions.' The Cadbury company were obviously keen on progressing matters in the workplace, and were intent on both sharing their views with other Quaker employers, as well as influencing future Quaker thinking in the area. Throughout this thesis there has been reference to pluralism as the underlying characteristic of the Cadbury management approach. But perhaps a pluralism that is more in keeping with contemporary discussions and debate, rather than the earlier approach exemplified by Clegg (1975), focusing on resolving differences in the workplace through collective bargaining. The moral dimension of the Cadbury's approach has been emphasised in the thesis too, and this is perhaps more in line with the pluralist formulations and ethical socialism of Flanders, where the emphasis is on *reason, freedom, equality and fellowship* (Ackers, 2011).

Cullinane noted that with the decline of trade union and collective bargaining coverage in the industrialised nations, pluralists have looked to other instruments and measures like consultation rights, dispute resolution systems and legal regulation (p. 1). This has some resonance with the neo-pluralism approach formulated by Ackers (2002), making the necessary connections between work and society.

> It does not introduce any startling new theoretical revelations into sociological thinking. Rather, it revives Durkheim's fundamental question about how moral communities and social institutions can bond work and society together. To this it adds contemporary concerns about rights and responsibilities, and allows employment relations to range, more imaginatively, across all aspects of the employment relationship and its links with the rest of society (Ackers, 2002, p. 15).

Cadbury's approach seems to fit within such a neo-pluralist approach of collective bargaining plus state regulation. An earlier reference was made to Cadbury's Christian idealism, following in the footsteps of T H Green, as well as some of the early Christian socialists like Frederick Denison Maurice and Charles Kingsley. The first Bishop of Birmingham, Charles Gore, an Anglo Catholic and friend of the Cadbury family, was also in that tradition. Notably, Gore provided the prefatory note to Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1922), and of course Tawney was another Christian socialist. Indeed, the lectures that formed the book were in honour of Henry Scott Holland, the Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford University, and founder of the Christian Social Union, something that George Cadbury supported with some enthusiasm. The links between the Cadbury family and those with an ethical approach to the workplace were clear and distinct, and

manifested themselves in the form of pluralism practised by the company. As these references to pluralism have been made throughout the thesis, there is no need to repeat them here. However, there is one contemporary element of pluralism that has not been mentioned before, and that is profit-sharing.

Traditionally associated with unitarist forms of management, financial participation has recently been accommodated within some pluralist thinking. Just as Cadbury accommodated a form of pluralism that remained loyal to collective bargaining and trade union representation, they could also embrace shop committees and works councils where representation was not restricted to trade union members. A similar approach was found in their approach to financial participation. In the company it was referred to as a 'prosperity sharing scheme', and was a direct gift from the firm to the employees. In 1920, the company decided to supplement the Unemployment Insurance Act recently introduced by the government, and provide a benefit to employees who were discharged (other than for misconduct) for a period of eighteen weeks for those who could not find other work. This was obviously a form of unemployment pay, but it was a one-way transfer of funds to help support former employees in periods of unemployment. A second form of 'prosperity sharing' was introduced in 1923. The company provided for the dividends of an imaginary block of shares to be transferred to a Welfare Fund, which had as its first call the provision of money to top-up the pay of employees on short time working. Any funds left over from short time payments were distributed to employees in the company. These novel ways of introducing additional supplements to staff wages were unusual for the time, and were always provided out of the profits of the firm, and never counted as running costs.

In conclusion, by making use of these propositions it is difficult to conclude that Cadbury was a paternalistic employer. Certainly the company was progressive and ahead of its time, and it did treat its employees with some care and concern. Indeed, the company was quite committed to retaining something of a familial set of relationships in the firm, even when the employees numbered many thousands. But there is no evidence to suggest the company applied paternalism as a form of narrow social control. Quite the opposite, all employees were encouraged to exercise their opinion through the mechanisms that prevailed in the company, be they trade unions, works councils, or both. If the charge of paternalism against Cadbury can be readily dispensed with, what then of Rowlinson's broader critique?

Rowlinson's critique

The central thrust of Rowlinson's critique is that references to Quakerism have diverted attention away from a more thorough going analysis of labour relations at Cadbury. As three of Rowlinson's papers have already been reviewed, I'll provide a final example of his critique of the company, and then summarise his main points in the Conclusion. Rowlinson's final paper is a review essay of 'Cadbury World' in the *Labour History Review*.

Once again, Rowlinson makes clear his intended objective to question the use of Quakerism to explain the historical growth and development of the firm:

> Cadbury World, which opened in 1990, presents an idealised image of the Cadbury factory and Bournville village in bygone days. Whether or not it is still meaningful to refer to Cadbury ……as a Quaker firm, Quakerism remains prominent in the firm's heritage……In common with Cadbury World, many brand experiences have a historical aspect. Therefore, following my last visit to Cadbury World, I propose to consider it in terms of the potential conflict between corporate heritage and the representation of history, especially in relation to the management of labour (Rowlinson, 2002, pp. 101-2).

In some senses it is difficult to understand what Rowlinson was trying to achieve with his review of Cadbury World (Note 13). Certainly, he is wanting to criticise the way in which the company is represented in Cadbury World. For instance, he deplores the fact that Cadbury World never sought the advice of academic historians when it was set up, and when the cultural historian Catherine Hall used Cadbury World 'to tell a story about imperial history', she was '*more or less* dismissed as the rantings of a left-leaning professor from one of the newer universities' (my italics, Rowlinson, 2002, p. 113). Surely Rowlinson did not seriously believe Cadbury would welcome such an interpretation? To be fair to Rowlinson, he does suggest that the company, which in 1902 had begun educational initiatives at Bournville, provides little intellectual sustenance to the Cadbury World visitor. There may well be some substance in that, but it should be remembered that Cadbury World is meant to be entertaining as well as educational. And the story of Cadbury *is* told, albeit a different story to the one Rowlinson would tell.

Rowlinson's concerns about the lack of serious literature on the firm in Cadbury World would be better made if it were made in a more measured way. He mentions Chinn's book on Cadbury (1998), which *was* available in Cadbury World, but regrets its heavy reliance on Cadbury publications for material (Rowlinson, 2002, p. 114). This is a fair point to make, but he neglects to mention the strengths of Chinn's text. In the space of 116 pages, Chinn's book contains a wealth of material and contains everything the interested visitor would want to take away: an overall history of the company; plenty of interesting facts and figures; wide-ranging photographs and illustrations, and lots of personal memories of former staff. It also has the added attraction of a short 'Foreword' by Sir Adrian Cadbury. In truth, most visitors to Cadbury World are more likely to buy a short, interesting, educative and entertaining book like Chinn's, rather than one replete with citations, however worthy it might be.

The disappointment with the Cadbury World article is that it seems to ignore the idea of informing and entertaining. Public history of this kind is an important field of study, much of it owing its early development in Britain to Raphael Samuel and his associates in the History Workshop movement (Samuel, 2012). Whilst it remains important that public

history maintains fidelity to the truth, to attract customers it still needs to provide interest and entertainment. To complain that much of Cadbury World is visual and based on imagery rather than historical documents is to deny current developments in teaching and learning. Imagery and storytelling are ways in which much teaching and learning takes place today. This is the case whether the 'customer' is a university student or a visitor to Cadbury World. This innovation and experimentation is entirely consistent with Quaker initiative, although Cadbury has long since passed out of family control. Even at the end of his article, Rowlinson retains a sharp tone:

> I hope that the decline in the historical dimension at Cadbury World does not signal that it is on the way to becoming just another inauthentic theme park……[with] indifference, if not downright hostility, to historical dialogue.
> (Rowlinson, 2002, p. 115)

That is a view many of us would echo, but his overall critique in this final piece is perhaps shallow compared to the earlier articles, probably suggesting his argument was exhausted by this time. That argument, as we have seen, has a number of flaws, but most critically fails to appreciate the importance of the Quaker dimension in Cadbury's approach. The Birmingham industrial and Nonconformist context, influential too, also failed to attract Rowlinson's attention. Further, and perhaps most importantly, Rowlinson's argument lends itself to a neglect of the Cadbury contribution to British industrial relations pluralism as it developed in these years.

'Sophisticated Modern' or 'Neo' Pluralism

In reiterating some of the main points to demonstrate Cadbury fits quite definitely in the pluralist camp, I will draw attention to the examples provided by workplace practices in the company. The whole area of industrial relations pluralism provides fascinating reading, and in other circumstances would warrant a detailed discussion. But for our purposes, the earlier comments I made identifying pluralism, and a sophisticated form of pluralism at that, will be sufficient to conclude the thesis. However, in order to provide some kind of framework to assess the extent to which the practices Cadbury implemented at Bournville fit within this pluralist paradigm, I will return to the recent piece written by Edmund Heery (Heery, 2015), and referred to earlier (p. 62). Heery is specifically looking at pluralism in connection with worker participation, and that is precisely the Cadbury approach, i.e. the extent to which workers should have some say and influence in the running of the company. As part of his comprehensive analysis of the pluralist frame of reference, Heery provides us with a set of standards we can apply to evaluate participation in practice (Heery, 2015, pp. 28-9). He does this by identifying both 'classical' and 'more recent' positions.

The classic position is participation through collective bargaining. The traditional defence being that it provides a means of regulating conflict in the workplace. He also cites Kaufman (2010) in suggesting it was a means of integrating the working class into stable,

capitalist democracies. This latter point seems more contestable, and I wonder whether this is because Kaufman was probably using the USA as his main point of reference. Alongside this, Heery suggests there were two other, important, principles. On the one hand there was a need for the workers to have an independent voice, one that could not be compromised by the employer. The other was a need for a 'power-based' system, one that meant employers were compelled to address worker interests. Citing Ackers (2010), he suggests that meant workers in trade unions having the economic and organisational resources to sanction employers in pursuit of their legitimate interests. Heery goes on to suggest that alongside these traditional arguments, there are newer standards generated following the publication of Freeman and Medoff's *What Do Unions Do?* (1984). The main argument being that unions have a generally benign effect on the economy and society. In other words, something of a 'business case' can be made for pluralist forms of worker participation. A second argument is made in favour of 'social justice' in the workplace, one closely aligned with the argument that labour rights are essentially human rights. Gross (2012) is cited as promoting this argument, and this also finds most of its support in the USA.

Having noted these evaluative mechanisms, I will now use them as a means of ascertaining the extent to which the Cadbury approach sat within this framework. Together, they can relatively easily be situated within the 'sophisticated modern' paradigm, and together, they should provide a sufficient range of benchmarks by which to judge the Cadbury case. In essence they will include both the 'consultative' and 'constitutional' forms of sophisticated modern, in that Cadbury as a company included elements of both in its labour management practices in the period covered, 1899-1919. First is the reference to collective bargaining. As noted earlier in the thesis, there is not much in the archives that refer specifically to negotiations between the company and trade unions in this period. Nevertheless, there are some written records, and these date from 1909, with the first written wage agreement being in 1911 between the company and the National Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks (Williams, 1931, pp. 110-111). There is little doubt how keen the company were in negotiating with trade unions. Edward Cadbury began articulating the importance of trade unionism and his enthusiasm for it in his first book, *Women's Work and Wages*, and repeated it in all his subsequent writings. Further, when the Works Councils were introduced in the company, it was made explicit that they were in no way to trespass on the ground of the trade unions. This was clearly stated in the Works Council Handbook, and maintained quite rigidly.

When it came to the independence of trade unionism, Cadbury was once again very clear. Earlier, on pages 8 and 91, I provided the following quote:

> The test of any scheme of factory organization is the extent to which it creates and fosters the atmosphere and spirit of co-operation and goodwill, *without in any sense lessening the loyalty of the worker to his own class and its organizations* (my italics, Cadbury, 1912, p. xvii).

The words in italics are clear enough. There was no desire on the part of Cadbury to have 'company trade unionism', or anything like it. There is even a reference to social class, and the loyalty of the worker to his or her own class. This was a very unusual comment for an employer to make. But there was practical action in terms of organising too. Earlier in the thesis reference was made to Julia Varley, and the support Cadbury gave her in organising the women at Cadbury into the appropriate trade union. Further evidence was provided by the references to the discussions on trade unionism and shop stewards in the *Bournville Works Magazine* (pp. 9-10). As regards reference to 'power-based' trade unionism, there is no doubt that as a Quaker Cadbury would have been uncomfortable with this kind of language. Co-operation and compromise would be the language more commonly used by the Cadbury family. Even so, Edward Cadbury's support for independent trade unionism was clear. The corollary has to be the right to take independent industrial action. Indeed, Cadbury's personal support both practically and financially for the striking Cradley Heath chain makers would be an example of that support. Although outside the scope of this thesis, when the General Strike took place in 1926, many men and women at Cadbury joined the strike, demonstrating their independence of the company. Williams, referring to the event, suggested that after the strike the Works Councils played a helpful part in ensuring that "any difficulties that arose [were] frankly and fully discussed, and an accommodation reached between the various interests" (Williams, 1931, p. 126). This is very interesting. Here is an example where trade unions and Works Councils worked together to bring about a normalisation of working relationships after a difficult period of strife. This sort of behaviour seems to anchor the company very firmly in the 'sophisticated modern' or 'neo' camp. However, before moving on to make more use of Heery, there is perhaps a need to expand upon some of the inconsistencies to be found in Cadbury and Quaker thinking.

Having noted these factors that relatively easily 'fit' Cadbury within the 'sophisticated modern' paradigm, there are other factors that need to be taken into account too. Cadbury's pluralism was based on Quaker principles, ones that conform to an ethical/religious platform. Alongside this, his approach sat within a business case based on developing an efficient and profitable company, infiltrated with elements of paternalism, as for example the marriage bar to employment of young women. These factors complicate our understanding of Cadbury, and there appears some ambiguity in his thinking and practice. This is further reinforced if we return to earlier remarks made by Quakers at the their Conferences of 1918 and 1928 (pp. 136 – 138). In 1918 Quakers were acknowledging that poverty was due to unjust conditions, but at the same time they were unwilling to challenge capitalism as an economic system. At the next Conference in 1928, Quakers make it clear that decision-making on commercial and financial matters remained with the employer, and Edward Cadbury made this point explicitly in his Conference 'Welcome' (*Report*, 1928, p. 1). There appears a lack of consistency in what is said.

In many ways these thoughts, ideas and practices, take us back to the earlier concept of 'complexity', suggested by Andrews and Burke in their paper entitled 'What Does it Mean to Think Historically? Although there is no easy way of characterising some of the ambiguities and paradoxes that typified society in this period, including those held by Edward Cadbury and the world of Quakerism, some sense can be made by using the antinomies, 'individualism' and 'collectivism'. Dicey, in his *Lectures on Law and Opinion* (1906), outlined the transition from 'individualism' to 'collectivism' in British society since 1870, a transition he deplored. Services that had previously been a private or local responsibility, were taken over by government legislation, a good example being the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908. These ideas tended to be promoted with some enthusiasm by the 'new' Liberals, and the thinking behind it was extended by Fabians like the Webbs. Not that all of this was new. Specialist government departments had been set up for some years, including the Local Government Board in 1870, the Labour Department of the Board of Trade in 1893 and the Board of Education in 1899. Social theory in the form of T H Green has already been mentioned earlier in the thesis, but alongside Green one can place Durkheim and his 'mechanical' and 'organic' solidarity, Weber and his work on bureaucracy, and Tonnies and his 'gemeinschaft' and 'gessellschaft'. All epitomised notions of a shift from individual to more collectivised forms of organisation in society. But, of course, like any transition it was not consistent, regular or linear, and this can help us in trying to understand the ambiguities that exist in Cadbury's thinking and approach. Once again, the Quaker emphasis on 'experimentation' in the workplace, suggests some 'experiments' were successful and some were not.

Cadbury was a keen advocate of government intervention in the economy to right what he considered to be fundamental wrongs, hence his support for legislation like that of the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908, and the Trade Boards Act of 1909. But these pieces of legislation need to be seen in the wider context of other legislation that was appearing in this period: Conciliation Act 1896, Employers Liability Act 1897, The Factory Act 1901, Unemployed Workmen's Act 1905, Labour Exchanges Act 1909, and the National Insurance Act 1911. Together, these were significant interventions in the economy, and Edward Cadbury was a keen participant in this whole process. These were the beginnings of the welfare state that we know today, and demonstrate something of a Left Liberal/Social Democratic set of political objectives, political objectives that Edward Cadbury could easily endorse. These objectives were pluralist in composition, and, with caveats, accepted the capitalist economic system. The caveats being ideas and thoughts that supported government intervention where necessary, but also a moral dimension that supported changes in personal behaviour too. The sort of behaviour that was consistent with his Quaker beliefs, but also sat firmly within the Christian line of thinking that included Christian Socialists like Tawney, as well as the future Archbishop of Canterbury, supporter of the Labour movement and author of *Christianity and Social Order* (1942), William Temple.

These individualistic strains of behaviour continued to exist alongside the more collective spirit that was emerging, and, as such, produced a society of complexity and paradox.

Before returning to Heery, it will also be useful to contrast Cadbury's approach with that of the Human Relations school of management. Elton Mayo (1880 – 1949) introduced this approach to management, much of which he derived from his research at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company. The research began in 1924, and continued up until 1932, with some of the findings being published in *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (1933). Essentially, Mayo concluded that the individual in the workplace should not be studied in isolation, but needed to be studied as part of a group. In doing so, a fuller understanding of the worker could be achieved by noting the impact others in the group, as well as the physical environment of the workplace, have on the worker. This is interesting because it overlaps with some of the thinking of Edward Cadbury. We have already noted the importance Cadbury attached to trying to create a pleasant environment in which to work, including health and recreational facilities. Cadbury shared Mayo's view that the individual worker was essentially a social animal, and needed to be part of a wider social setting if he or she were to reach their full potential. But Cadbury differed from Mayo in his encouragement and support of trade unions. Mayo seemed to attach little importance to trade unions, and said little about them in his findings. This is all the more surprising, given that trade unions are essentially collective organisations, and bodies that provide the sort of support, help and guidance that Mayo seemed to encourage. This could be because the economic and industrial environment in the USA tended to be hostile to trade unions, and Mayo was simply a part of that general view. Another explanation could be that Mayo saw his work principally as an adviser to managers and their companies, rather than recognising that there was at least some conflict of interest between worker and employer. This, once again, indicates a difference with Cadbury, who was a pluralist precisely because he recognised different interests existing in the workplace.

Returning to some of the more recent standards suggested by Heery, first is the argument that trade unions have a generally benign effect on the economy and society. This idea that there is a 'business case' for trade unionism, or at least a trade union voice to be heard in the company, is certainly something Cadbury supported. He noted this in the first part of the quotation provided earlier:

> The supreme principle has been the belief that business efficiency and the welfare of the employees are but different sides of the same problem (Cadbury, 1912, p. xvii).

Cadbury was quite clear that by working together both employer and employee would benefit. He saw no difficulty in this, although there was a need for the necessary (pluralist) mechanisms in place to help bring this about. At Cadbury this was independent trade unions and the Works Councils. As the company was a very successful and profitable company in this period, including recruiting thousands of extra workers, Cadbury's views seem to have been vindicated. The second recent standard that Heery refers to is that of

social justice in the workplace. In other words, labour rights are human rights. These present-day arguments seem to have been unknown in the period under review, but Cadbury clearly saw beyond the workplace too. Most of the present-day arguments tend to focus on minorities in the workplace. So, in recent times there has been reference to the lack of women in the board room, or the difficulties encountered by BAME workers achieving senior positions in the workplace. Although BAME workers would not have been an issue in the period under review, simply because there were far fewer of them in this period, this was not the case with women workers. All of Cadbury's early work was about improving the place of women at work and in society generally. This was most obviously the case in fighting long and hard over a living wage for women in the 'sweated' trades. Another, perhaps even more interesting example, is the case of Dorothy Cadbury (Kimberley, 2016a). Dorothy Cadbury was the daughter of Barrow Cadbury, a cousin of Edward Cadbury, and one of the four directors of the company in this period. In 1919, when the board was expanded, Dorothy was made a full director of the company. Although a family member, it is notable that this was a woman achieving a directorship of a major British company in 1919. There must have been few other companies that were prepared to go down this path at that time. Whilst this has little to do with human rights, it is an example of the company being well in advance of other companies in this period, and being prepared to promote a woman to the most senior of positions.

These comments seem sufficient to reiterate the view that Cadbury was firmly pluralist, particularly as this point has been made repeatedly throughout the thesis, supported with appropriate evidence where necessary. The conclusion to the thesis will re-visit the three central themes identified in the introduction, summarising the core argument and proferring a final suggestion that the Cadbury approach contained the kernel of a specifically Quaker approach to industrial relations, grounded in the idea of 'covenant'.

Conclusion - Reassessing EC as a progressive employer, innovator and contributor to British Industrial Relations pluralism

Introduction

My interest in Cadbury was first stimulated by the apparent lack of published material on the company. Those that had looked at the company tended to describe Cadbury as 'paternalist', but that seemed too simplistic an answer. Mick Rowlinson's work was an important corrective. He analysed the company in some depth, and produced a range of interesting and important comment. But whilst I admired much of what he had written, it still left me unconvinced. It seemed to me that too little was made of the Quaker influence, as well as the peculiarities of the Birmingham environment. Then, as I read more of Cadbury's written work, I realised that the beginnings of an industrial relations pluralist approach was evident, but completely ignored in the literature. In drawing the thesis to a conclusion, I will first return to my central argument and reiterate the findings around the three core themes, summarising my contribution to knowledge, before ending with the outline of a framework that provides what might be considered a Quaker approach to industrial relations that may still have some relevance to a more secular age.

To what extent was the firm of Cadbury paternalistic?

In the introduction we differentiated between weak and strong versions of paternalism, the weak version being benign and benevolent behaviour by the good employer. The strong, which I have characterised as 'narrow social control paternalism', is where the employee submits to the subordinate role in the employer-employee relationship. I have sought in the thesis to argue against the suggestion that Cadbury was a narrow social control employer, instead maintaining that notions of fellowship and partnership were promoted at Cadbury, and these were genuine and sincere, and entirely consistent with the Quaker testimony to equality, noted by Child in his paper on Quaker approaches to industrial relations (Child, 1964) As much of this has already been addressed in the thesis, I will simply reiterate appropriate points in the thesis that bear witness to these aspects. This will be done by identifying particular workplace practices.

The rejection of the hard version of paternalism was first noted in the quote provided by Crosfield when referring to the building of the Bournville housing estate. Here, Crosfield noted the estate was not restricted to housing for one social class or even for one employer (Cadbury), but instead was open to all and designed to "foster independence and avoid paternalism" (p. 7). Given that the estate started being built in the late nineteenth century, this provides us with an early example of Cadbury resisting any inference of paternalism. Some confusion can arise when considering sports facilities, mutual aid societies, sick clubs, etc. Certainly Cadbury did encourage and support these in the firm, but not as a form of social control. Family members had already been promoting them in their Adult School classes in Birmingham, and these were examples of an outgrowth of their

Quaker beliefs and practices, not as a form of social control. As they proved of benefit to their students in the Adult School classes, it seemed natural to use them to the benefit of their employees in the workplace too (p. 38).

When we return to Edward Cadbury and his specific support for women in the workplace, his role in helping set up the Women's Social Service League, designed to help organise Birmingham women in to trades unions, is instructive. His co-author, George Shann, is quoted in the *Bournville Works Magazine* (June, 1909) as saying it is important the women organise themselves, not "the middle-class interested in the movement." This hardly supports the idea of encouraging acquiescent, subservient women, in Birmingham factories or at Bournville. Further, Professor Ashley, when writing the preface to Cadbury's *Experiments in Industrial Organization* (1912) is quite clear that Cadbury was motivated more by a sense of social duty rather than paternalism, and this from a man who freely professed himself to be opposed to the Liberal-Labour politics of the Cadbury family (p. 91). When making reference to the suggestion scheme in his book, *Experiments....* (1912), Cadbury makes the specific point that the scheme is not simply about rewarding the employee with a cash benefit, but is equally important in "fostering an intelligent independence" (p. 100). Once again, no hint of a paternalistic approach here. Finally, the set of propositions I have borrowed from Ackers (2002) have proved a particularly useful tool in helping me to demonstrate that Cadbury in its workplace practices was not a narrow social control paternalistic firm.

Was the management approach at Cadbury an early form of pluralism?

I have made good use of Heery, who was first mentioned earlier in the thesis on page 62. Heery is particularly apposite for use in this thesis, as his chapter was specifically in relation to employee participation. He reminds us of the 'frames of reference' typology that is still used as a useful framework to make sense of industrial relations. Heery provides us with a set of standards we can apply to evaluate participation in practice, and this was used in the previous section of the thesis to do just that. Instead, here I will concentrate on other occasions in the thesis that helped provide evidence that Cadbury pursued an approach that could be described as 'sophisticated modern' or 'neo' pluralist. I noted this in the earlier definition provided by Cullinane (p. 2). Cadbury is already encouraging the use of legislation to introduce a minimum wage in his first book (1906), and is particularly keen on enforcing the legislation that already existed to ensure women in particular, but employees more generally, enjoyed the minimum workplace conditions to which they were legally entitled (p. 71). But, pre-eminently, trade unions and trade unionism are already being supported as the necessary countervailing power to that of the economic power of the employer. This was particularly important for Cadbury, as he promoted trade union membership enthusiastically and widely: First, through membership in the company, particularly among women workers who were less inclined to join; second, he supported it more widely among the sweated trades, e.g. supporting the Cradley Heath chain makers; third, he employed

Julia Varley to organise women workers into trade unions at both Cadbury and beyond; fourth, helping organise the Women's Social Service League of Cadbury workers, to organise Birmingham women workers into trade unions, and fifth, membership of the Birmingham Socialist Centre, encouraging and supporting trade unionism throughout Birmingham.

Earlier in the thesis some coverage was given to the Sweated Trades Exhibition of 1906, encouraged and supported by the Cadbury family, and part-financed by them too. Mention was made of guests at the Exhibition like Gertrude Tuckwell, Chair of the Trade Union League, who was advocating state intervention as providing permanent remedies to improve the lot of the sweated trades. Edward Cadbury saw public policy as a central platform to improve pay and working conditions in the workplace (p. 76). Clementina Black was also mentioned a little later in the thesis, identifying four remedies at the Exhibition to help avoid subsistence pay: a) trade union organisation, b) legal enforcement of health standards in the workplace, c) minimum levels of skill to be required in appropriate trades, and d) a sense of public duty on the part of employers. These are all consistent with modern versions of pluralism, and were consistent with the work and views of Edward Cadbury (p. 79). Another element of Cadbury's approach that promoted the more modern elements of pluralism, was his promotion of welfare benefits and leisure facilities. In the eyes of critics, these will often invoke accusations of paternalism, but as used by the Cadbury family it was perfectly consistent with a more modern form of pluralism. Taking leisure as an example, Cadbury provided facilities for a wide range of leisure activities, including swimming baths. But, once set up, the workers themselves set up their own activities, clubs and organisations to make use of the facilities, without any interference from the company. Indeed, the company always encouraged independence and responsibility, seeing much of the worker development in these activities as educational. Welfare, of course, has long been seen as something of a paternalistic ploy, but not in the hands of Cadbury. Cadbury was an instigator in setting up the Welfare Workers' Association, forerunner of today's Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), and was keen to professionalise this field of workers. He saw this work as fundamental to the smooth running of the workplace, but, more importantly, as a key set of workers whose particular purpose was to oversee the recruitment, health, welfare and development of the workforce (p. 10). Interestingly, this is much the role the CIPD see for themselves today: "Championing better work and working lives" and "Experts on work: Advancing knowledge and understanding about people management and development" (cipd.co.uk).

By the time the thesis arrives at the Quaker Employers Conferences of 1918 and 1928, we see similar points being made about pluralism (pp. 136-153). Whilst these views are not exclusively those of Cadbury, it is interesting to note that these ideas are emerging amongst Quaker employers as something of a consistent approach. Sufficiently so for me to proffer the idea that the Quaker employers together generated something of a Quaker approach to industrial relations. One that could be described as 'sophisticated modern', and was based on a firm belief in the existence of independent trade unions. This remains

the most convincing evidence that Cadbury was a pluralist. I have referred to this Quaker approach as 'covenantal', and expand on it in the conclusion to the thesis.

How influential was Quakerism to the development of the workplace system at Cadbury, i.e. Rowlinson's critique?

Rowlinson has done those of us with an interest in the Cadbury company and its history something of a favour in drawing attention to the importance of Cadbury as an employer, and his work warrants very serious consideration. He rightly raises issues that have not been covered by other commentators, and opens up to debate and scrutiny the benign and benevolent image that is often portrayed by many of those who have written on the company. Second, he has taught us that there is much to be recovered from a deeper exploration of the archives. He made significant use of them in his PhD research, and they have proven very useful in his published work on the Cadbury company. Third, and this is a direct result of his exploration of the Board minutes and associated documentation, he has highlighted information on scientific management and what he considers to be its use by the company. Fourth, he forces us to engage with the question of whether the Cadbury culture was 'invented' to produce something of a benevolent image, and, more generally, questions whether there was a Quaker set of values among Quaker employers that could be said to shape their business practice

Rowlinson's conclusion is that the Quakerism of the Cadbury family had little bearing on the labour management policies that emerged within the company in the early twentieth century. *I take a different view, arguing instead that the family's Quakerism was particularly influential in the way the labour management policies emerged and developed within the company*. However, the relationship was certainly not clear or straightforward. If that had been the case, all Quaker companies over the same period would have developed similar approaches, and that was clearly not the case. Indeed, a number of labour historians have noted the famous Bryant and May 'match girls strike' of 1888, at a company with Quaker roots (Raw, 2011). Although, even here, the evidence can be mixed. While much of the material on the match girls strike is highly critical of the company, it is worth noting that after the strike had been settled, the London Trades Council issued a report on the entire affair in which it was shown that most of the charges levelled against the company were without foundation (Beaver, 1985). Whilst examples of Quaker companies operating progressive workplace practices can be found since early in the seventeenth century, they only gelled into something of a common approach early in the twentieth century with the beginning of the Quaker Employers' conferences in 1918. Andrew Fincham (2017) describes how Quakers in the early eighteenth century achieved success in business and commerce through four mechanisms: the emphasis on education and vocational training; a communal financial structure which supplied the necessary capital; a network and community of Quakers to facilitate interaction and support during the process of business development and growth, and, finally, the discipline of a religious

community that promoted values compatible with commercial success. Mark Freeman, in another recent comment on Quaker business, draws attention to profit-sharing and labour relations features in Quaker companies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Freeman, 2013, pp. 428 – 9). But neither approach considered anything like the detailed labour relations discussions and policies that emerged with the Quaker Employers' Conferences.

A particular weakness in the Rowlinson argument is a distinct lack of reference to the world of Quakerism in the period under review. The earlier section in this thesis on Quakerism in Birmingham in the early twentieth century helps to remedy this omission. Quakerism is not a static faith or religion, and has gone through at least five phases or periods in its history (Dandelion, 1995; Angell and Dandelion, 2013). This is neglected by Rowlinson, and the omission leads him to mistaken conclusions. Furthermore, Birmingham, throughout the nineteenth century and beyond, remained a predominantly Nonconformist city, and this had a bearing on the attitudes and values of the industrial relations that emerged (Tiptaft, 1972). So, a second, and perhaps equally important omission, is the limited reference to industrial relations in Birmingham at the time (Hopkins, 2002). Once again, I've attempted to remedy this with my earlier section in the thesis on industrial relations and its development in Birmingham in the early twentieth century. Throughout its history, the Bournville plant, the home of all the Cadbury labour management initiatives, employed predominantly Birmingham workers. But Birmingham, within the annals of British industrial relations, developed quite differently from the other major industrial towns in Britain during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Whilst there was a particularly strong trade union and labour movement tradition in evidence, it was really quite different to that of other major industrial cities. Birmingham trade unionism was less radical, and developed a more co-operative and participative spirit, despite its well-deserved reputation for hard-nosed negotiation and bargaining. It seems fair to conclude that these attitudes and values, alongside those of a modernist form of Quakerism, made the introduction of good industrial relations at the Bournville plant easier and more harmonious. To dismiss Cadbury's Quakerism as mere epiphenomenon or invented historiography, and to neglect the influence of the Birmingham industrial relations environment of the time, is to neglect two factors of central importance.

In reiterating the main points of this section, I would like to think that the evidence produced in this thesis on Edward Cadbury and the Cadbury company has made a distinctive contribution to knowledge in three particular ways: a) it confirms that Cadbury was not a narrow social control paternalistic company, b) that in the labour management approach developed by the company, the beginnings of a form of industrial relations pluralism is clear, and, c) demonstrating that Quakerism was a central influence in the company approach to managing people, and in so doing, contesting the Rowlinson thesis that Quakerism was merely a convenient label deployed by the company.

Covenant – A Quaker approach to industrial relations?

How might we conclude our understanding of what was happening in the Cadbury company in this period, and what lessons might they provide for today? Indeed, do they provide any lessons at all for a more secular age where notions of 'business ethics' and 'corporate social responsibility' have largely replaced religious conviction? Whilst the early decades of the twentieth century were a completely different time and setting for the development of industry and commerce, are there some broad ideas or principles that still impress upon us a better way of developing workplace relationships than those that often exist in the world of work today? This study of Cadbury suggests there are, and they could form the basis of a Quaker set of business values that make sense in today's world of work. They are a set of values that apply particularly to industrial relations and workplace relationships. A recent entrant into the field is Turnbull, who has provided us with an excellent review of what he terms 'Quaker Capitalism', and the lessons it might provide for us today (Turnbull, 2014). Turnbull rightly notes that we cannot copy or replicate the Quakerism of yesterday in the very different economic and social context of today, but he draws out of his research a set of principles that could be used to inform business practice today. They begin with the idea of 'wealth creation as a moral responsibility', traverse through 'a faith that formed a moral code', and end with 'applying commercial solutions to social problems'. In all there are ten such principles, and together they make much sense. However, in total they make something of a tall order. All of them can be traced back to Quaker business leaders over the years, but together they make a particularly ambitious programme, and may be a set of principles for the future rather than today.

An earlier set of principles, set out by Sir Adrian Cadbury, former Chairman of Cadbury, takes us closer to the ideas that Quakers would be more familiar with today. They comprise a set of ideas that seem simple and straightforward to understand. There are five in all: respect for the individual; taking the spirit of the meeting; the need to find the better way; regard for education and concern for the community (Cadbury, 1985, p. 9). This set of principles or values, should make complete sense in the world of business. Understandably, Cadbury drew upon his personal experiences of the company, and the way in which he believed the company had been run. Clearly, there is something essentially Quaker about this set of values, no doubt due to Cadbury's own experience of being brought up within a strong Quaker family and environment. 'Respect for the individual' draws upon the Quaker notion of the 'inward light', 'taking the spirit of the meeting' makes use of the Quaker business method, and 'concern for the community' can find inspiration in the Quaker booklet *Advices and Queries*, brief statements that collectively articulate the Quaker faith. Cadbury concluded his discussion by noting two aspects of the Quaker approach that inspired: the first was that, for Quakers, their lives were whole, and their work both in business and the community was an expression of their faith, and secondly, that they combined morality with good management. This is a particularly inspiring set of principles, and they provide us with much food for thought. But as wise and thoughtful as they are,

they still require some translation when applying them to the world of business. 'Taking the spirit of the meeting' or even 'finding the better way' might require some interpretation before finding much resonance with the world of business. Might there be another alternative?

There is another alternative, but before moving on to that, it would be worthwhile to remind ourselves of the degree of consistency in Quaker thinking over the years. Whilst aberrations will always be found in an organisation that has existed for almost 400 years, the level of consistency is quite conspicuous. Previous reference has already been made to Quakers and their approach towards business and trade, but it would be helpful to identify a range of doctrinal statements that confirm this. In 1675, not long after Quakers had organised themselves into a religious community, the *Rules of Discipline* said:

> Let friends and brethren in their respective meetings watch over one another in the love of God and care of the Gospel; particularly admonish that none trade beyond their ability nor stretch beyond their compass....1675

There are regular reminders not to engage in hazardous or reckless ventures, particularly those that involve borrowing money and running up debts (1692, 1732). By 1797 they issued an edict that is remarkably similar to contemporary statements, emphasising 'service' as an important part of business and trade:

> We do not condemn industry; which we believe to be not only praise-worthy, but indispensable. It is the desire of great things, and the engrossment of the time and attention, from which we desire that all of our dear friends be redeemed. We doubtless owe duties to ourselves and our families; but we owe them also to society.....1797

By 1819 they are encouraged to regularly examine their "state of affairs", so as to maintain themselves as "honest, upright men". To do so they need "to keep clear accounts", so that if there is a need to show them to others, the accounts will "appear perspicuous and intelligible." Speculation in business is once again discouraged in 1824:

> Speculations of any kind which may seem to hold out the prospect of a rapid accumulation of wealth, greatly endanger tranquillity of mind. They often involve in perplexities, which disqualify us for exercising a patient dependence upon Him from whom cometh our strength.

The above statements are representative of the approach to business and trade in the first two centuries of Quakerism. All are contained in the *Book of Discipline* (Religious Society of Friends, 1834, pp. 268 – 272), and all emphasise just and fair dealings, honesty and uprightness, avoidance of debt and speculation, and business and trade as being a service to society, not as a means of naked wealth accumulation. This approach continued for the

remainder of the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries, by which time the Yearly Meeting of 1911 is issuing the following epistle:

> It remains to speak of the Way of Service , as it concerns the conduct of our ordinary work and business. Nowhere is the practical working of our faith put to a severer test, yet nowhere is there a nobler and more fruitful witness to be borne. Business in its essence is no mere selfish struggle for the necessities and luxuries of life, but " a vast and complex movement of social service." (Religious Society of Friends, 1922, p. 116)

Much of this consistency in approach was captured in a document that was issued by London Yearly Meeting (annual conference) of the Religious Society of Friends in 1918. This was a document that had been three years in the making, and arose out of the War and Social Order Committee, formed in 1915 to investigate how Quakers might approach issues of 'war and social order'. The Committee itself had a range of Quakers on it, including Maurice Rowntree, a conscientious objector who had written his handbook, *Co-operation or Chaos* (1917), which incorporated similar thinking on industry to that of G D H Cole and guild socialism. Another member was J Walton Newbold, at this time a Quaker, but later to become Britain's first Communist M.P. The membership of the Committee was clearly diverse, and issued a radical document at the time. Interestingly, it has remained a favourite amongst Quakers, and retains its place in the current book of discipline:

1. The Fatherhood of God, as revealed by Jesus Christ, should lead us toward a brotherhood which knows no restriction of race, sex or social class.
2. This brotherhood should express itself in a social order which is directed, beyond all material ends, to the growth of personality truly related to God and man.
3. The opportunity of full development, physical, moral and spiritual, should be assured to every member of the community, man, woman and child. The development of man's full personality should not be hampered by unjust conditions nor crushed by economic pressure.
4. We should seek for a way of living that will free us from the bondage of material things and mere conventions, that will raise no barrier between man and man, and will put no excessive burden of labour upon any by reason of our superfluous demands.
5. The spiritual force of righteousness, loving-kindness and trust is mighty because of the appeal it makes to the best in every man, and when applied to industrial relations achieves great things.
6. Our rejection of the methods of outward domination, and of the appeal to force, applies not only to international affairs, but to the whole problem of industrial control. Not through antagonism but through co-operation and goodwill can the best be obtained for each and all.
7. Mutual service should be the principle upon which life is organised. Service, not private gain, should be the motive of all work.
8. The ownership of material things, such as land and capital, should be so regulated as best to minister to the need and development of man.

(Religious Society of Friends, 2015, 23:16)

This leads into what I consider to be an alternative approach, one that involves a trip back to the teachings of George Fox, the first Quaker. His teachings still inform and make much sense today. Although the writings of George Fox can require some unpicking, Joseph Pickvance has provided a useful guide to help us plot a way though much of his work (Pickvance, 1989). Drawing on the works of Fox, Pickvance suggests the character of a true Christian is expressed by both inward and outward faithfulness. Inward faithfulness being the way in which the Christian behaves towards God, but outward faithfulness is demonstrated in our relationships with each other and the natural world. Here, within these personal relationships, we can find a set of values that provide us with something of a framework by which the Quaker business might conduct itself. There are six of them, and all are to be found in *The Journal of George Fox* (Nickalls, 1975, hereafter referred to as '*Journal*').

First is honouring God in everyone (*Journal*, p.36). In the business world this will have a particular provenance in the fields of equality in the workplace, and the breaking down of social barriers and divisions between the classes. Even the use of titles and other forms of social pride could come within this field. Edward Cadbury was a particularly strong advocate for improving the role and status of women in society, and campaigned over many years to achieve these objectives (Kimberley, 2016). Second is to behave in a just and fair manner (*Journal*, p. 26). This suggests ensuring power isn't abused by those in positions of authority in the workplace, with an equal responsibility resting on employees to give honest service. This is surely the basis of all good industrial relations, and is to be found, among other suggestions, in *Foundations of a True Social Order*, the ideas supported and promoted by British Quakers to create a better society after the First World War (London Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1918). Third is the requirement to administer law in a just manner (*Journal*, p. 66 and p. 577). This suggests good governance, which will involve administering justice mercifully, and providing a firm stand against injustice. The way in which Cadbury set about dealing with employees who were less than efficient showed considerable help and support to bring them up to standard. The way in which they were treated was with compassion and understanding, which reduced punishment and dismissal to levels well below that which was common in industry at the time.

Fourth was the desire to be a peacemaker (*Journal*, pp. 398 – 404). There is plenty of evidence of Quaker peacemaking over the centuries, most histories tracing the idea back to the 1660 Quaker Peace Testimony. Peacemaking was the way in which relationships were encouraged and supported in Cadbury, and this could be found in the way in which industrial relations was practised, particularly through the Works Committees and Works Councils. These practices were well ahead of their time. Fifth was the need to be upright and righteous in one's dealings with others (*Journal*, p. 400). This was particularly the case in trade and industry. Cadbury's were known and respected for their honesty and integrity, and their opposition to deception and sharp practice in business and commerce. They were

also patient and disciplined in the way in which they conducted themselves. Being a family that was politically liberal, they often felt the opprobrium of the conservative press, but maintained their vigilance in supporting the early welfare programmes of the 1906 – 15 Liberal governments (Phelps Brown, 1959, Harris, 1993). Finally, respect for, and responsibility towards, the natural world (*Journal*, p. 439). This is an unusual suggestion, and certainly one that has only recently come to the fore through the environmental movement. Yet this has often been a consideration in business decisions at Cadbury. Opposition to excess and the abuse and destruction of the natural world finds good example in Cadbury company decisions, but most obviously it is demonstrated in the way in which the Cadbury family built and developed the Bournville village, now run by the Bournville Village Trust.

How might we interpret this general approach, drawing on Fox's teaching? The idea of 'covenant' suggests itself as a concept that has much to recommend. Although it might appear overtly biblical and religious, and too far removed from the hard-nosed world of business, it is more than merely fanciful. No less a figure than Lord Digby Jones, former director general of the CBI, has recently advocated the idea of a 'business covenant'. He sees it as a moral agreement between government, business and society, not unlike the covenant that exists between the armed forces, government and society. Nor is he alone in the business world. Justin King, former chief executive of Sainsbury's says much the same, expressing this in terms of the moral duty business has to go beyond what is expected of it (Jones, 2014). Pava (2003), writing on covenantal leadership, reminds us that there is no inherent contradiction between the religious life and the practical one. Indeed, he goes further and suggests that "A true spiritual life can be achieved *only* inside the mundane and everyday world, and not apart from it" (Pava, 2003, p. xiii) The American Quaker, Doug Gwyn, has written on the notion of covenant amongst early Friends, but also makes some forceful comments about present day society (Gwyn, 1997). In particular, he alerts us to the dark side of capitalism, and the way in which personal relationships can quickly be subsumed within a plethora of contractual arrangements. Such arrangements effectively replacing relationships of warmth and generosity with those of contract and exchange. But a covenantal relationship is essentially a lived relationship, one based on respect, tolerance and understanding. Covenant is not a legal arrangement, but instead is an expression of the unwritten expectations we have of each other in our daily lives:

> There are many struggles to be waged socially and politically against the blights of the system that engulfs us so totally. But if we wish to move beyond a reactive political posture, let us reclaim a sense of covenant. Covenant is not a super-theory defining everything. It is not a master-plan for a new society. Rather, it is a sense of the whole, a sense of integrity that keeps sight of the forest, and of one's place in it. Covenant is a web of faithful, accountable relationships as complex and polymorphous as capitalism itself – even more so. It does not simply shrug off the people, values, and species that find no value in the market, but insists that there be room for everyone (Gwyn, 1997, p. 70).

Cadbury was just such a business. It wasn't a perfect business, nor would the family have made such a claim. But it provided a model of behaviour that is worth further investigation. The notion of 'covenant' is a relatively unexplored concept within the world of business, but is an idea that captures the imagination. Further exploration would help demonstrate its value and its usefulness. At the very minimum, covenant seems an idea worth reclaiming.

Bibliography and Notes

Note 1 This approach follows, in part, the framework outlined by P Ackers in 'Doing historical research in human resource management: with some reflections on an academic career', Ch 8 in Townsend, K, Loudoun, R and Lewin, D (2016) *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods on Human Research Management*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Note 2 The *Bournville Works Magazine* began being produced by the company in 1902, and provides a fascinating set of interesting and informative information about the company and its priorities during the early years of the twentieth century.

Note 3 From 1861 the *Book of Discipline* was divided into three sections:

1. *Christian Doctrine* – concerning the Christian theology and beliefs of Friends;
2. *Christian Practice* – concerning the lives and testimonies of Friends
3. *Church Government* – concerning the organisation, structure and government of the Religious Society of Friends. This was revised in 1883, where it took the name *Book of Christian Discipline*. Subsequently, the three chapters became three separate books, revised at various points over the next 50 years.

Note 4 The most obvious example of the traditional and somewhat autocratic approach that Cadbury applied within the workplace, was the refusal to employ young women once they married, believing that to employ married women was to take them away from their proper role as wives and mothers. Today this would be seen as incredibly old-fashioned, as well as counter to employment legislation. However, at the time this was not only consistent with the approach of many employers, but was also an approach shared by many within the Church.

Note 5 The original company had been formed by John Cadbury in the early nineteenth century, but by the early 1860s was perilously near to closure. He transferred ownership to his two sons, Richard and George, who worked hard to turn the company around. They had almost completely used up a legacy left to them by their mother, and were about to make plans for alternative employment, when the company picked up in the late 1860s. They had ploughed everything they had into keeping the company afloat, and had worked long hours with little reward before they managed to turn the company around.

Note 6 The *Bournville Works Magazine* records many examples during these years of employees expressing their thanks to the Cadbury family for their benevolence, kindness and charity.

Note 7 L J Satre (2005) *Chocolate on Trial: Slavery, Politics and the Ethics of Business*, Ohio: Ohio University Press, is the most recent and comprehensive comment on the issue. William Cadbury, who dealt with the matter on behalf of the company, wrote his own book on the affair, W A Cadbury (1910) *Labour in Portuguese West Africa*, London: George Routledge and Sons Ltd. There is also an archive of William Cadbury material on the matter in Birmingham Central Library.

Note 8 The 'Quaker Employers' conferences took place in 1918, 1928, 1938 and 1948, and represent a unique example of employers from a Christian denomination exploring together on a systematic basis common approaches to business practice and behaviour. Whilst other Christian denominations did organise occasional conferences and discussions on appropriate practice and behaviour in the workplace, no other denomination organised an approach in such a structured and organised manner over a similar period of time.

Note 9 The early Christian Socialists were promoters of these ideas. The key issues to address were those of greed and inequality, seen as being the product of capitalism as it existed in nineteenth century Britain. Frederick Denison Maurice (*The Kingdom of Christ*, 1838), John Ruskin (*Unto This Last*, 1862), Charles Kingsley (*The Water-Babies*, 1863), Thomas Hughes (*Tom Brown's Schooldays*, 1857), were examples of the genre.

Note 10 The Master and Servant laws were a series of Acts of Parliament that regulated the relationship between employer and employee during the nineteenth century, but were seen by employees as heavily biased towards the employer. The Master and Servant Act 1823 and subsequent updates stipulated that all workmen were subject to criminal penalties for disobedience, and calling for strikes was punished as an "aggravated" breach of contract.

Note 11 Quakers do not have a creed, but they do have what are called 'Advices and Queries'. Advices are a set of missives based on the spiritual wisdom that has been gleaned by Quakers over the years; Queries are a set of challenges that help Quakers both individually and communally to consider their current spiritual condition.

Note 12 In 1918, a coalition government passed the *Representation of the People Act 1918*, enfranchising all men, as well as all women over the age of 30 who met

minimum property qualifications. This act was the first to include practically all men in the political system and began the inclusion of women, extending the franchise by 5.6 million men and 8.4 million women. In 1928, the Conservative government passed the *Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act* giving the vote to all women over the age of 21 on equal terms with men.

Note 13 Cadbury World is a visitor attraction in Bournville, Birmingham, featuring a self-guided exhibition tour, created and run by the Cadbury Company. The tour tells the history of chocolate, and of the Cadbury business, making some (but not extensive) use of its Quaker beginnings.

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